Bishops withhold support for Brother Mike's coalition

Story on PAGE A2

GMA accepts Bush invitation to visit US

By Dona Pazzibugan

US President George W. Bush has invited President Macapagal-Arroyo to Washington, DC to discuss further anti-terrorism assistance.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the President has accepted the invitation.

In his letter dated Jan. 14, Bush also as-

GMA/ A7

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Saturday, January 18, 2003 ★ 52 pages / 5 sections / vol. 18 / no. 41 P15
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Gloria now for Cha-cha

Says 'least divisive' way is con-con poll in 2004

By Carlito Pablo, Rocky Nazareno and Juliet Javellana

CHOOSING what she called the "least divisive" of options, the President yesterday said she favored the use of a constitutional convention to change the 1987 Constitution.

But Charter change should push through only if there is a consensus on the need for "fundamental changes in the political system," President Macapagal-Arroyo said in an interview with a group of foreign journalists.

At his news briefing, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye begged off from questions, saying the announcement was "self-explanatory."

When pressed for the reason President Macapagal was now in favor of a constitutional convention, when she had repeatedly stressed that reform and not Charter change was the priority in her remaining 18 months of office, Bunye said: "This is an expression of her sentiments on the matter."

In her interview, however, the President was categorical about her doubts about the wisdom of pushing Charter change at this time. "Considering the divisiveness in our country, this issue is bringing about even more divisiveness,"

GLORIA/ A15

THE RAGE of Vice President Teofisto Guingona at a prayer rally for peace on Friday attended by militant forces that helped Edsa II happen two years ago on Jan. 19, is directed at the Philippines all-out support for the US' impending war on Iraq. ERIK ARAZAS

Guingona: War to devastate economy

By Norman Bordadora

A WAR in Iraq will mean a "devastated" Philippine economy, Vice President Teofisto Guingona warned yesterday.

Speaking at a prayer rally organized by anti-war activists and militant youth groups, Guingona declared opposition to a US-led attack on Iraq and said the Philippine government could not ignore the danger this would pose to more than a million overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East.

"Our economy, which relies on [the workers'] remittances to keep afloat, will be devastated," he said in remarks at the St. Vincent de Paul Church in Manila's Adamson University.

About 1.3 million of the seven million Filipinos who work abroad are based in the Middle East.

OFWs sent an estimated $8 billion to the Philippines last year—an amount equivalent to the country's entire agricultural output by independent estimates, Agence France Presse reported.

Guingona also said the effects of the looming disaster would go beyond the Philippine economy and foreign policy.

GUINGONA/ A15

Party mates deaf to GMA call for end to politicking

By Juliet Javellana, in Manila and Connie E. Fernandez,
PDI Visayas Bureau

THE PRESIDENT may have asked for an end to "endless politicking," but is anyone listening?

Not her own Lakas party members, if a dinner hosted by Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras last Monday is any indication.

And not a group of "ordinary citizens," who will launch today a draft Fernando Poe Jr. campaign in Cebu City.

The group of about 30 congressmen led by Paras agreed to ask businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. to run for president in 2004.

Cojuangco, an ally of both the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and deposed President Joseph Estrada, is chair emeritus of the Nationalist People's Coalition, the second biggest party in Congress.

Paras said there was "unanimity" from the group to endorse Cojuangco as standard-bearer of a Lakas-NPC coalition.

"We talked about the possible presidential candidates from Lakas but we didn't see any viable candidate. When the name of Danding Cojuangco was mentioned, (however,) there was unanimity," Paras said.

PARTY/ A15

9 years later, TRO keeps land reform beneficiaries landless

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE WHEELS of justice may grind. exceedingly slow but 85 farmers of Barangay Casile in Cabuyao, Laguna, are fighting to live.

Their struggle began in 1993 when the Supreme Court ordered a stop to planting activity on the land awarded to them by the Department of Agrarian Reform two years earlier. The land comprises 254.76 hectares of the vast Canlubang Estate owned by the family of Jose "Sel" Yulo Jr., who served as housing adviser to then President Joseph Estrada.

But the farmers of Casile have not stopped tilling the soil despite the temporary restraining order hanging over their heads.

They have no choice but to live, said barangay chief Sergio Cruzat. "We have families to feed and children to send to school," he said.

The farmers grow rice, corn, coffee, fruits, and root and vegetable crops. But as a direct effect of the TRO, they have been barred by private guards from using the access road to the nearby Cabuyao market, Cruzat said.

Their only way out is a "backdoor," an uphill dirt road leading farther to Tagaytay City, where they bring their harvest.

Cruzat said he had known no other land than this rich soil his forefathers began tilling in 1910.

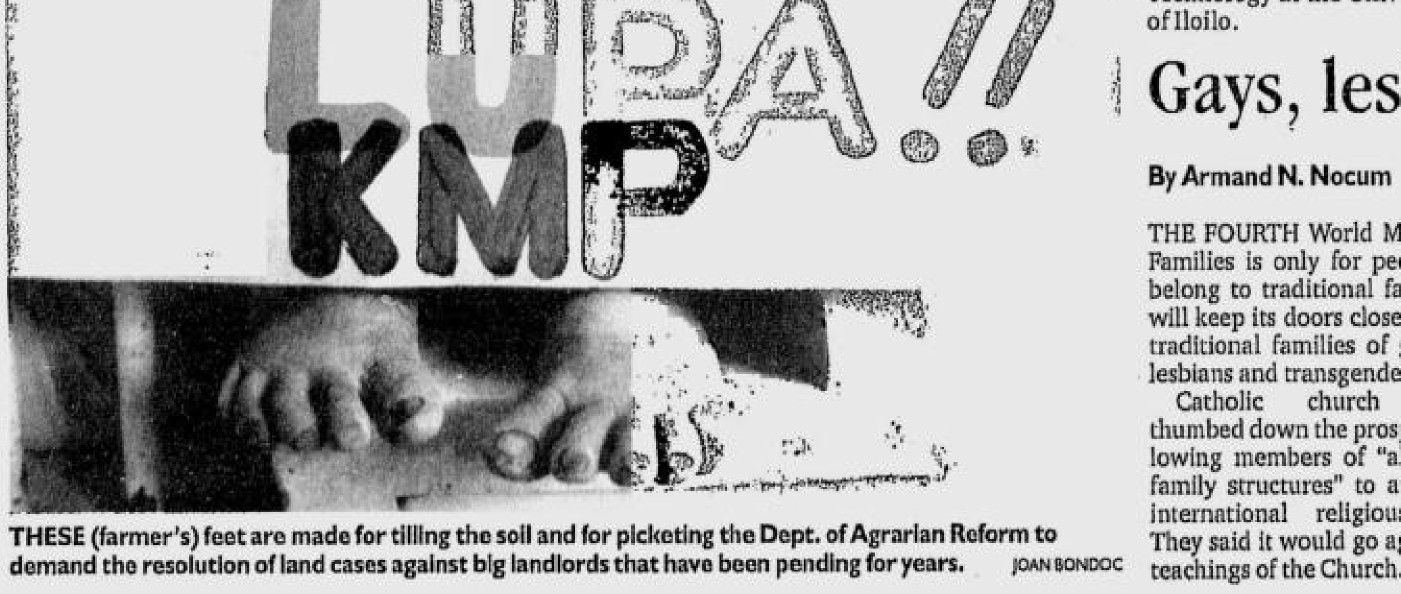
"The TRO has been in effect for nearly nine years, and it's been more than a decade since the DAR awarded the land to us," he noted. "But until this day justice has not been served."

It was only on Oct. 21, 2001, or nearly nine years after it issued the TRO, that the Supreme Court issued a decision on the petition for review filed by the Yulo-owned Sta. Rosa Realty Development Corp. (SRRDC).

The firm had questioned a Court of Appeals ruling dated Nov. 5, 1993, affirming that the land was covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

In a decision written by then Associate Justice Bernardo Pardo, the tribunal's first division set aside the appellate court's decision and remanded the case to

9 YEARS/ A6



THESE (farmer's) feet are made for tilling the soil and for picketing the Dept. of Agrarian Reform to demand the resolution of land cases against big landlords that have been pending for years. JOAN BONDOC

She spurns money and gets better deal: A dream come true

By Alcuin Papa

FOR HER exemplary act of honesty, Maria Fe Sotelo was offered a cash reward but had turned it down. But she got a better deal: A childhood dream come true.

A Festival Mall security guard, Sotelo was informed by the INQUIRER that the leadership of the Philippine National Police had waived its age and height requirement for PNP aspirants.

"I'm so happy I can't even express how happy I am. Thank you very much, (PNP chief) Gen. (Hermogenes) Ebdane," an exultant Sotelo told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"Ever since I was a child, that has been my dream. And I can't believe it is now happening," added Sotelo, who graduated as an associate of Police Science and Technology at the University of Iloilo.

Not quite 5 feet tall and already 32 years old, Sotelo's application to the PNP had been rejected. To be a police officer, an applicant has to be more than 5 feet in height and not more than 25 years old.

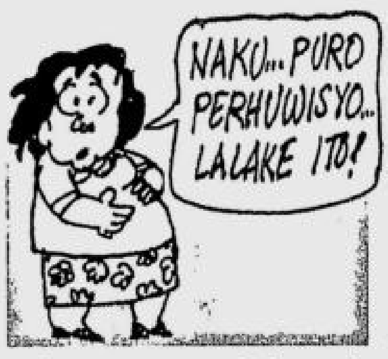
However, Ebdane told reporters the other day that the PNP was "willing to bend the rules a little bit" to accommodate Sotelo.

Ebdane also ordered the PNP's Directorate for Personnel and Records Management to waive the height and age requirement to allow Sotelo to join the force.

Sotelo, who found a Chinese businessman's belt bag with half a million pesos inside the Festival Mall in Alabang, said she was "willing to undergo the training" required for rookie cops.

While doing her rounds in the early morning of Jan. 7, Sotelo found the bag inside

SHE/ A6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If it's trouble, it must be a boy

LONDON—Women's problems with the opposite sex begin in the womb because boys—according to a new study—cause more complications than girls during labor and delivery.

Male infants require more cesarean section or instrument deliveries than girls, cause longer labors and need more fetal blood samples and hormone stimulation to induce contractions, doctors said on Thursday.

Boy babies are larger, heavier, leaner and have bigger heads than girls but Maeve Eogan, of the National Maternity Hospital in Dublin, Ireland, said that does not explain all the differences.

IF IT'S/ A7

Gays, lesbians left out in world meet

By Armand N. Nocum

THE FOURTH World Meeting of Families is only for people who belong to traditional families. It will keep its doors closed to nontraditional families of gay men, lesbians and transgenders.

Catholic church leaders thumbed down the prospect of allowing members of "alternative family structures" to attend the international religious event. They said it would go against the teachings of the Church.

But homosexuals, lesbians and transgenders are still welcome to attend the event as long as they come with their traditional family unit.

The Church leaders were reacting to a challenge posed yesterday by the Lesbian Advocates Philippines (LeAP) that the World Meeting of Families "address existing realities" of "shifting gender roles and expectations and the emergence of alternative family structures such as single-headed households and lesbian and gay families."

In a statement, LeAP said that although the event seeks to "deepen the mission of fathers in the family," it overlooked the fact that some fathers beat up their gay or lesbian children or force them to marry against their will.

"If the meeting caters only to the mainstream, then it may not be seeing the entire picture of the family," the group said.

"We are in your families and yet there is no call for love, accep-

GAYS/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern section of the country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/18/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Bishops withhold imprimatur

By Armand N. Nocum

"WHAT are they up to?"

Until it figures out the answer, the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) is withholding support from the newly formed unity coalition of businessmen, laborers and religious leaders.

In an interview with Church reporters, CBCP secretary general Monsignor Hernando Coronel raised doubts about how people with religious differences, conflicting ideologies and political views could unite to effectively work for peace and progress.

Who leads?

First of all, Coronel wondered, "Who will take the lead?"

The recently formed Bangon Pilipino Movement (BMP) is made up of more than 36 groups from the academe, labor sectors, business leaders, farmers, transport groups, and government employees.

Velarde initiative

Led by Mike Velarde's El Shaddai, the coalition was formed "to break the national paralysis caused by politicians' preoccupation with the 2004 elections." The influential Iglesia ni Cristo was represented at the BMP launch on Wednesday, but only "to demonstrate support for the growing public call for a non-partisan agenda for unity and economic recovery."

Although he conceded that the coalition's efforts were "laudable," Coronel believed "such a mix" would result in a platform of compromises. "This is our concern," he said.

"What is their program? What is the basis of their unity? What are their agreement points?" He said these were some of the questions that the CBCP would "discern" during its annual plenary assembly on Jan. 27.

The form, not the premise

National unity as a premise is not the problem at all. Yesterday, urban poor and middle-class groups formed another alliance for the cause.

The Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabayan, Bagong Pilipino, Bigkis Pinoy and Ahon Bayan announced the birth of Movement for Peace and Cooperation (MPC), composed of vendors, public transport drivers, and farmers.

Declaring support for President Macapagal-Arroyo, MPC is set to hold a rally "for peace and cooperation" on Monday to commemorate Edsa II. Bagong Pilipino executive director Romy Rodriguez said it would be a prelude to a bigger activity in support of the President's call for unity and reforms.

Bigkis Pinoy executive director Ado Ocampo pointed out that Ms Macapagal had done "some good," but that "times are really hard."

Rodriguez said MPC would "eventually" hold a dialogue with Velarde's coalition, so that both groups could keep an eye on politicians.

Skeptical adviser

Meanwhile, Velarde's call for "politicos" to enlist with his group before they could be allowed to go on stage during prayer rallies, was met with skepticism by El Shaddai spiritual adviser Fr. Anton Pascual.

"We welcome his crusade with optimism, but he should be consistent," Pascual told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

El Shaddai spokesperson Mel Robles immediately clarified that Velarde merely wanted to ban politicians, not from attending, but from campaigning during the gatherings.

Two lawmakers who had never gone to an El Shaddai rally found Velarde's words "self-righteous," and his attitude definitely "holier-than-thou."

Politicians insulted

Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez yesterday said the charismatic group's leader had "insulted" politicians.

"He used to find it advantageous to be seen with politicians, especially during the time of former President (Joseph) Estrada" Gonzalez said. "All of a sudden, he is forsaking them? That's a little strange."

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales acknowledged that the public was generally cynical about politicians, but said that as "a general rule, not all politicians are ill-motivated." *With Blanche S. Rivera and Christine O. Avendano*

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EDSA II REUNION

Tito dares Gloria: Actual, not rhetorical reforms

By N. Bordadora

PROMISES, promises.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona yesterday challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo to "concretize" the reforms she vowed to undertake when she announced her withdrawal from the 2004 presidential elections.

In a forum attended by Edsa II leaders from militant organizations and civil society groups, Guingona said the President faced the "tough" task of making Filipinos experience the fruits of economic reforms in just 18 months.

"She herself said it: reform or perish," Guigona said. "These reforms should not only be rhetorical but actual."

Guingona said Ms Macapagal's economic priorities, which included legislation for the Special Purpose Asset Vehicle and the Transmission Corporation, did not address the people's immediate needs.

Among the others present at the Edsa II "reunion" were former Senator Wigberto Tañada, Bayan Muna Reps. Satur Ocampo and Crispin Beltran, and Council of Philippine Affairs spokesperson Pastor "Boy" Saycon.

The organizations presented a six-point unity agenda calling for, first and foremost, the scrapping of proposed constitutional amendments.

While they welcomed the President's withdrawal from the presidential race, the Edsa II "forces" said in a statement, it was not enough to end the politicking or reverse the worsening economic, social and political conditions. Nor was it enough, they said, to "achieve national unity."

Their proposed agenda includes the implementation of immediate measures for economic relief and consumer protection, review and reversal of globalization policies inimical to the national interest, pursuit of plunder and graft cases, assertion of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and revival of formal peace talks with rebel sectors.

The agenda addressed specific issues: purchased power adjustment, the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement, implementation of the Asean Free Trade Agreement and peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front.

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SolGen eyes reform making it easier to annul marriages

By Michael Lim Ubac

BURDENED with the much more pressing legal problems of the State, the Office of the Solicitor General wants to remove itself from one crucial step in the marriage annulment process.

Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo made this bold declaration after noting the large number of married couples turning to the courts to legally sever their matrimonial ties.

Under the law, the government, represented by the prosecutor or fiscal, is required to participate in annulment proceedings to make sure there is no collusion between the two parties making the petition.

A certification from the Solicitor General is required before a judgment of an annulment case can be promulgated.

Amid complaints about delays in the issuance of the Solgen resolution, Benipayo said in a statement that he agreed with a recent proposal that the certification requirement be removed.

"There is no pressing need for the OSG to intervene in these cases," said Benipayo who asked the Supreme Court to heed the recommendation which would "not only unburden litigants but the OSG as well."

Based on the records of the OSG's docket division, the OSG is currently handling 14,863 cases for declaration of nullity and annulment of marriage, Benipayo said.

On top of this, the OSG "continues to receive" every month individual cases from couples desiring to separate, including celebrities, he said.

Among the showbiz personalities who have instituted or have pending annulment cases are television and movie personalities Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez and Alma Moreno, Jomari Yllana and Aiko Melendez, Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez, John Estrada and Janice de Belen, Geneva Cruz and Paco Arespacochaga, Carmina Villarroel and Rustom Padilla, and Benjie Paras and Jackie Forster.

With the increasing number of annulment cases every year, Benipayo believes that the opinion of the Solgen in every annulment case brought before family courts should be dispensed with.

Iraq envoy cautions RP: 1.5M could lose jobs

THE IRAQI Embassy has cautioned the Philippines to look after the interest of the 1.5 million overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East in considering the role it wants to play in case the United States decides to attack Iraq.

Samir Bolus, charge d'affaires of the Iraqi Embassy in Manila, said all OFWs in the Middle East will lose their jobs if the Philippine government expresses support to a US-led action against Iraq.

"I would like that the Philippines consider the interest of its people. You have more than 1.5 million Filipinos in the Middle East. They are working there. They are bringing you money. They are improving your economy," Bolus told reporters. *Norman Bordadora*

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Jaime Cardinal Sin receives from Globe Telecom vice president Ana de Villa Singson a plaque of support, given during Globe's turnover of funds raised from "Vatican Txter." Globe Telecom is the official and dedicated cellphone partner of the 4th World Meeting of Families.

Beware the ire of OFWs, GMA tells lawmakers

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has warned legislators they face a potential electoral backlash if they drag their feet on strengthening the Philippines' anti-money laundering law, her spokesperson said Friday.

The United States warned Manila earlier this week that it faced "international opprobrium and financial penalties" if it fails to meet a February deadline for amending the law, which western countries say has too many loopholes.

Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the President has asked Congress leaders to speed up the passage of the amendments and told them that sanctions could affect about seven million Filipinos who work abroad and send part of their salaries home.

Overseas workers make up nearly nine percent of the Filipinos. Politicians acknowledge that their Philippines-based dependents make up a formidable constituency.

"We asked our legislators for help in making the passage of the amendments to the money laundering law a priority," Bunye said on government radio.

He said the main feature of the proposed changes included giving regulators the power to inspect suspicious accounts containing less than P4 million ($74,900), which is currently the threshold for inspections.

Bunye said Ms Macapagal pointed out to legislators that overseas workers who regularly send remittances to their families could suffer because of any sanctions launched by the international anti-money laundering body, the Financial Action Task Force. *AFP*

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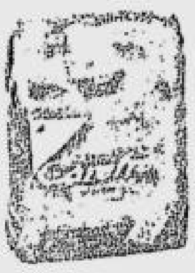

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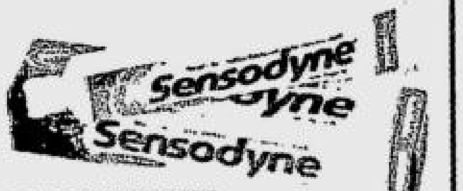

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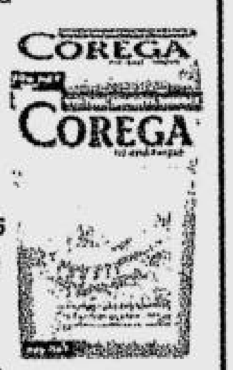

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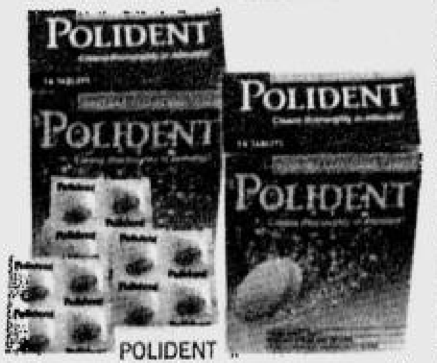

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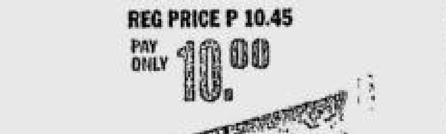

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PNP chief on Abu Sayyaf leader: 'Let him rot in the jungle'

By TJ Burgonio

"LET him rot in the jungle and let the forces hunt him down."

So declared Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. yesterday as he batted for the termination of negotiations for the surrender of Abu Sayyaf leader Hamsiraji Sali.

"I think I would suggest that negotiations for his surrender should be terminated. It's no use; it's useless," he told reporters during the 50th anniversary rites of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Camp Crame.

Ebdane said that he had earlier dissuaded "four groups of negotiators" from holding talks with Sali because the latter was not trustworthy, and his vows to surrender not credible.

"He is always putting one over these groups. He will accede to one requirement and yet at the last hour, he will say he can't do it. He could not be depended upon," he said, recalling how Sali changed his mind about yielding at the last-minute.

"I don't think he deserved to be negotiated on. Let him rot in the jungle and let the forces hunt him down."

Ebdane's statement came in the wake of Sali's revelation that he was given P400,000 by the CIDG as part of the conditions for his surrender. Sali, also known as Jose Ramirez, however, declined to name the negotiators.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, CIDG director, said the manhunt for Sali is ongoing. "In due time, I believe we will be able to corner him and arrest him," he said.

He also flatly denied Sali's claims that he was paid cash as concession for his surrender, saying "You know, this Mr. Sali, he's like Abu Sabaya. He talks a lot of nonsense. We just can't give any money to a criminal and a wanted person."

Matillano was referring to the Abu Sayyaf spokesperson who was killed in a clash with the military last year.

Matillano admitted the CIDG held negotiations with Sali in the past, but never granted any of the conditions that he set for his surrender. "We couldn't give in to his demands because only the PNP chief could decide on these," he said.

Telecom firms told: Spend more for security

THE Philippine National Police yesterday urged telecommunications firms hit by communist guerrilla attacks to spend more to secure investments worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

The country's two largest wireless operators, Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Telecommunications Inc., are targeted by the New People's Army rebels as "part of their extortion activity," PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane said.

NPA rebels have blown up or torched isolated cellular telephone towers owned by Globe and Smart in recent weeks, disarming company security guards in the process.

"While the police and the military will provide security assistance, it is incumbent upon Globe to secure its premises," said Ebdane, who noted that Smart has "upgraded their security requirements." Globe spokesperson Jones Campos told AFP that company facilities were hit badly in last year's attacks, and its security officers have since called for an increased budget. "We are addressing that," he added.

Campos said the company maintains about 2,000 facilities across the country, with a total investment of between P30 and P40 billion ($561-$749 million).

He said most of these radio facilities-cum towers are situated in populated areas, and that any attacks would likely affect innocent civilians as well.

Ebdane said Globe's towers have suffered continuous NPA harassment after the company, a joint venture of Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications Ltd., refused to submit to the rebels' extortion demands. *AFP*

3 NPA rebels slain in Davao encounter

DAVAO CITY—Government troops clashed with communist rebels in Baganga, Davao Oriental, yesterday, leaving three guerrillas dead.

Maj. Nixon Fortes, commander of the Army's 8th Special Forces, identified the slain New People's Army rebels as Rodel Andoy alias Wendy, team leader of the NPA's District Guerrilla Unit, Russel Tandog alias Jumar and John Ambasan.

He said a hand grenade and a handheld radio were recovered from the rebels.

Fortes said no soldier was hurt in the clash, which lasted 40 minutes. *Joselle R. Badilla with a report from Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
CEBU	5J - 557	Daily	DC9	0130	0240	P2,199*	P4,398*	P1,849	P3,698
	5J - 559	Daily	DC9	0500	0610	P2,569	P5,138		
	5J - 561	Daily	DC9	0700	0810				
	5J - 563	Daily	DC9	0900	1010				
	5J - 565	Daily	DC9	1100	1210				
	5J - 567	Daily	DC9	1300	1410				
	5J - 577	Wed/Sat	B757	1325	1435				
	5J - 569	Daily	DC9	1500	1610				
	5J - 571	Daily	DC9	1700	1810				
DAVAO	5J - 961	Daily	DC9	0500	0640	P3,239	P6,478	P2,288	P4,576
	5J - 963	Daily	DC9	0930	1110				
	5J - 965	Daily	DC9	1320	1500				
	5J - 967	Daily	DC9	1540	1720				
CAGAYAN de ORO	5J - 381	Daily	DC9	0510	0635	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
	5J - 383	Daily	DC9	0900	1025				
TACLOBAN	5J - 651	Daily	DC9	0610	0720	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 655	Daily	DC9	1210	1320				
ILOILO	5J - 451	Daily	DC9	0500	0600	P2,449	P4,898	P1,599	P3,198
	5J - 453	Daily	DC9	0620	0720				
	5J - 455	Daily	DC9	0955	1055				
	5J - 459	Daily	DC9	1600	1700				
BACOLOD	5J - 473	Daily	DC9	0510	0610	P2,449	P4,898	P1,799	P3,598
	5J - 475	Daily	DC9	1000	1100				
	5J - 479	Daily	DC9	1650	1750				
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 851	Daily	DC9	0520	0650	P3,239	P6,478	P2,079	P4,158
ROXAS	5J - 373	Daily	DC9	0530	0630	P2,199	P4,398	P1,799	P3,598
DUMAGUETE	5J - 627	Daily	DC9	1300	1410	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
KALIBO	5J - 339	Daily	DC9	0950	1040	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 343**	Daily	DC9	1320	1410				
BUTUAN	5J - 787	Daily	DC9	0900	1025	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
SUBIC	5J - 102	Th/Sun	B757	1210	1240	P500	P999	-	-

* Promotional Value Fare **Available until Jan. 19, 2003 only

ORIGIN: CEBU

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 556	Th/Sun	B757	0300	0410	P2,199*	P4,398*	-	-
	5J - 558	Daily	DC9	0400	0510	P2,199*	P4,398*	P1,849	P3,698
	5J - 560	Daily	DC9	0700	0810	P2,569	P5,138		
	5J - 562	Daily	DC9	0900	1010				
	5J - 564	Daily	DC9	1100	1210				
	5J - 566	Daily	DC9	1300	1410				
	5J - 568	Daily	DC9	1500	1610				
	5J - 570	Daily	DC9	1700	1810				
	5J - 572	Daily	DC9	1900	2010				
DAVAO	5J - 593	Daily	DC9	0800	0850	P2,249	P4,498	P1,649	P3,298
	5J - 597	Daily	DC9	1450	1540				
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 431	M/W/F/Sat	DC9	0905	1000	P2,319	P4,638	P1,969	P3,938
ILOILO	5J - 164	Daily	DC9	1750	1825	P1,759	P3,518	P1,249	P2,498
BACOLOD	5J - 126	Daily	DC9	0810	0840	P1,539	P3,078	P 999	P1,998

* Promotional Value Fare

ORIGIN: DAVAO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 962	Daily	DC9	0720	0900	P3,239	P6,478	P2,288	P4,576
	5J - 964	Daily	DC9	1210	1350				
	5J - 966	Daily	DC9	1540	1720				
	5J - 968	Daily	DC9	1800	1940				
CEBU	5J - 594	Daily	DC9	0930	1020	P2,249	P4,498	P1,649	P3,298
	5J - 598	Daily	DC9	1620	1710				
ILOILO --via Cebu	5J - 598/164	Daily	DC9	1620	1825	P3,195	P6,390	P2,199	P4,398
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 393	Tu/Th/Sun	DC9	0910	1010	P2,319	P4,638	P2,049	P4,098

ORIGIN: DUMAGUETE

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 628	Daily	DC9	1450	1600	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998

ORIGIN: BACOLOD

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 474	Daily	DC9	0920	1020	P2,449	P4,898	P1,799	P3,598
	5J - 476	Daily	DC9	1150	1250				
	5J - 480	Daily	DC9	1840	1940				
CEBU	5J - 125	Daily	DC9	0700	0730	P1,539	P3,078	P999	P 1,998

ORIGIN: BUTUAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 788	Daily	DC9	1115	1240	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698

ORIGIN: ILOILO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 454	Daily	DC9	0800	0900	P2,449	P4,898	P1,599	P3,198
	5J - 456	Daily	DC9	1135	1235				
	5J - 460	Daily	DC9	1740	1840				
	5J - 462	Daily	DC9	1905	2005				
CEBU	5J - 161	Daily	DC9	0640	0715	P1,759	P3,518	P1,249	P2,498
DAVAO --via Cebu	5J - 161/593	Daily	DC9	0640	0850	P3,195	P6,390	P2,199	P4,398

ORIGIN: TACLOBAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 652	Daily	DC9	0800	0910	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 656	Daily	DC9	1400	1510				

ORIGIN: ZAMBOANGA

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 852	Daily	DC9	1050	1220	P3,239	P6,478	P2,079	P4,158
CEBU	5J - 432	M/W/F/Sat	DC9	0730	0825	P2,319	P4,638	P1,969	P3,938
DAVAO	5J - 394	Tu/Th/Sun	DC9	0730	0830	P2,319	P4,638	P2,049	P4,098

ORIGIN: ROXAS

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 374	Daily	DC9	0710	0810	P2,199	P4,398	P1,799	P3,598

ORIGIN: CAGAYAN DE ORO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 382	Daily	DC9	0715	0840	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
	5J - 384	Daily	DC9	1105	1230				

ORIGIN: KALIBO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 340	Daily	DC9	1120	1210	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 344*	Daily	DC9	1450	1540				

*Available until Jan. 19, 2003 only.

ORIGIN: SUBIC

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 103	Th/Sun	B757	2330	2400	P500	P999	-	-

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

FROM	- TO	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD*	ETA*
MANILA	- HONGKONG	5J - 110	Daily	B757/DC9	0700	0900
		5J - 118	Daily	B757/DC9	1640	1840
HONG KONG	- MANILA	5J - 111	Daily	B757/DC9	1000	1200
		5J - 119	Daily	B757/DC9	1940	2140
MANILA	- SEOUL	5J - 194	Mon	B757	1340	1840
		5J - 1944	Fri	B757	1340	1840
CEBU	- SEOUL	5J - 128	Wed	B757	1535	2115
		5J - 1288	Sat	B757	1535	2115
SUBIC	- SEOUL	5J - 196	Th	B757	1340	1840
		5J - 1966	Sun	B757	1340	1840
SEOUL	- MANILA	5J - 195	Mon	B757	1955	2250
		5J - 1955	Fri	B757	1955	2250
SEOUL	- CEBU	5J - 129	Wed	B757	2225	0155
		5J - 1299	Sat	B757	2225	0155
SEOUL	- SUBIC	5J - 197	Th	B757	1955	2250
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Navy nabs 5 S. Koreans in illegal treasure hunt

By Martin P. Marfil

FIVE South Koreans and three Filipinos were nabbed by a Navy patrol in Palawan for alleged involvement in an illegal underwater treasure hunt, a Navy spokesperson said yesterday.

The treasure hunters were nabbed on Jan. 12 off Cape Buliloyan on the southernmost tip of Palawan where they were believed to be searching a shipwreck, said Navy spokesperson Cmdr. Geronimo Malabanan.

The five Koreans were identified as Chang Kwon-wwang, 39, Choong Keun-lee, 43, Young San-son, 40, Su Ik-chae, 53 and Sung Kwang-sig, 43.

Malabanan said the crew noticed the "unusual activities" of the group who had been at sea for three days hunting for treasure without a permit.

A Navy frogman who dove some 60 meters deep to examine the wreck was hospitalized after suffering from diving sickness and later died, Malabanan said. The spokesperson had no details on the wreck.

Diving equipment, including compressed air tanks, boots, weights and diving suits were confiscated from the treasure hunters, Malabanan said.

The Navy turned over those arrested to the Bureau of Immigration. *With AP report*

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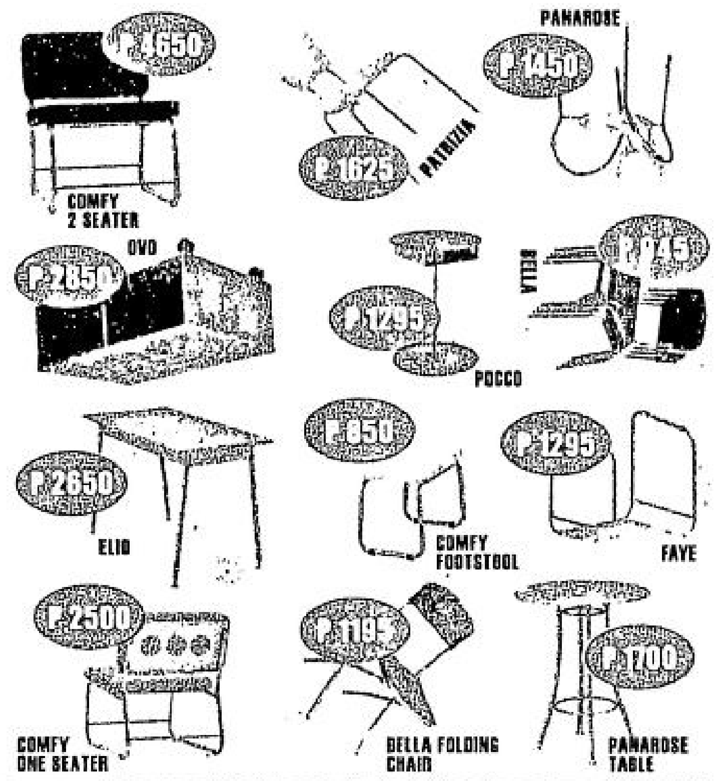

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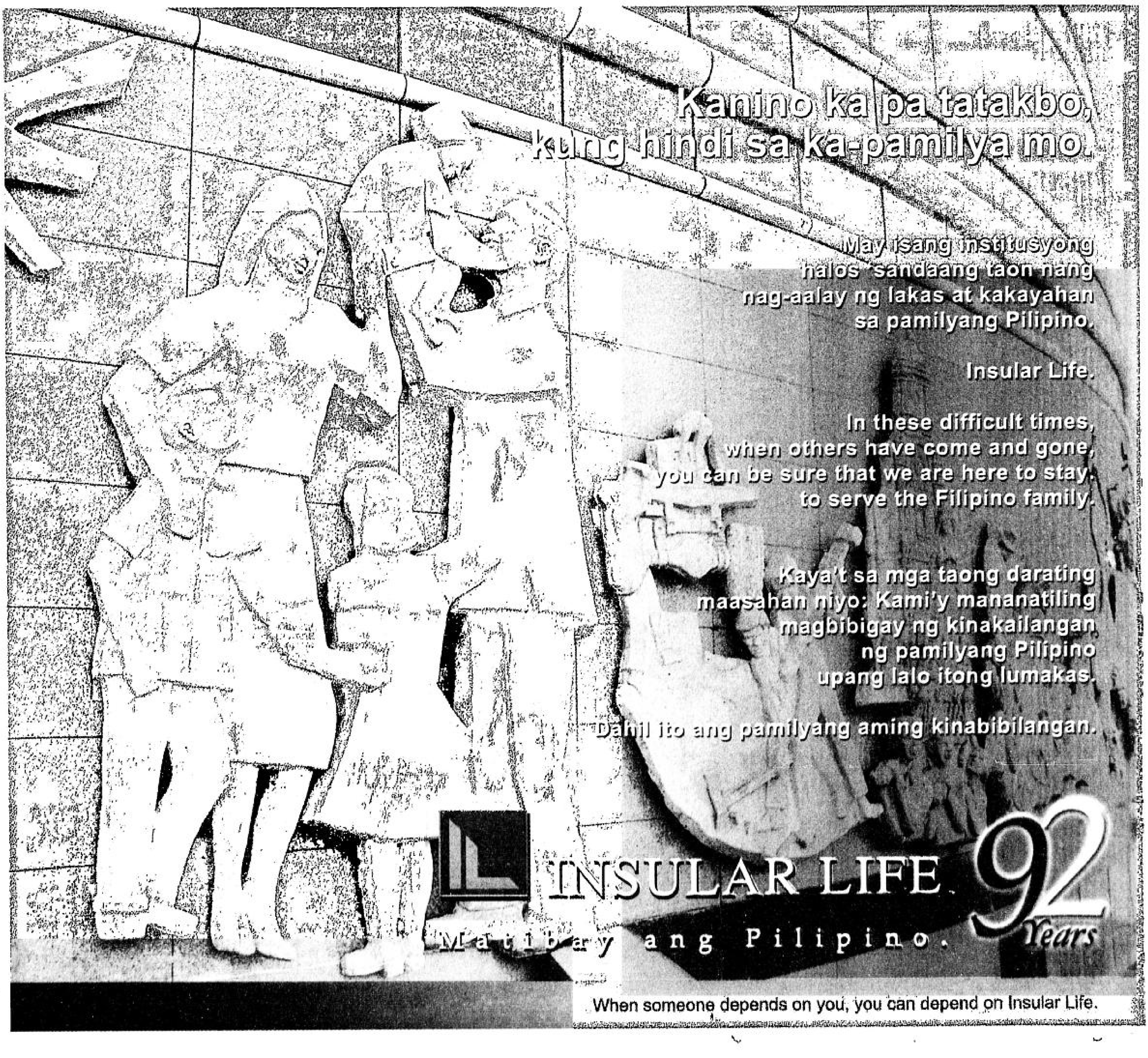

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Gays, lesbians left out in world meet

From page A1

tance and understanding for us," said LeAP.

Not recognized in RP

According to Fr. Joselito Jopson, media committee vice chair of the religious event, the Catholic church does not recognize homosexual relationships and people belonging to such families will definitely not be allowed to participate in the event.

"Homosexual unions are not recognized in the country and in other countries as well," Jopson said.

He explained that families attending the main program from Jan. 22 to 24 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila have been screened and recommended by their respective parishes. About 10,000 local and foreign delegates are expected to attend the event.

Msgr. Hernando Coronel, secretary general of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, said that only families, and not individuals, are allowed to attend the event.

Coronel said "same-sex marriages" go against the "teachings of the Church and reflections on family life."

But he hastened to add that although the Church frowns upon same-sex relations, it is more understanding of gay individuals.

"The Church condemns the sin, but not the sinner," Coronel said, adding that it even has an apostolate for "different groups" in the Church.

"They have spiritual needs. If they ask for the Sacraments, it's my duty to dispense them," he said.

Families of priests

In Iloilo City, two defrocked priests have reiterated their call for the Catholic Church to recognize their families and allow optional celibacy among the clergy.

Hector Canto and Jesus Siva said the Church should encourage priests who have families to come out in the open as Catholics mark the Fourth World Meeting of Families.

"The Church should not condemn priests who have families. It should support them. It is time for the Church to declare that priests are now free to form families," said Siva.

"If the Church is helping the families of the lay, why not the families of priests?" said Canto.

Canto came out in the open and married his girlfriend in May 1998. Siva, who has two children by his common-law wife, officiated the wedding. Both priests continue to defy their suspension by saying Mass and administering the Sacraments.

Siva claimed that at least 20 to 30 percent of some 200 priests in the Jaro Archdiocese have "underground families"—wives and children they keep from the public. He said he had even christened and acted as godfather to a son of a fellow-priest some years ago.

The two priests said they had no plans of joining the World Meeting of Families in Manila. *With reports from Ma. Diosa Labiste, PDI Visayas Bureau*

9 years later, TRO keeps land reform beneficiaries landless

From page A1

the DAR Adjudication Board (Darab) for reevaluation and determination of the nature of the land involved.

The tribunal also said the TRO it issued on Dec. 15, 1993, would "remain in effect until final decision on the case," meaning that the farmers' Certificates of Land Ownership and Award would likewise stay in limbo.

The decision, for which the farmers filed a motion for reconsideration, went unnoticed by the media. Pardo retired from the high court four months later.

Cruzat described the decision remanding the case to the Darab as strange.

He pointed out that the Darab, a quasi-judicial body, ruled on Dec. 19, 1991, that the land was covered by the CARP. It was also the Darab that ordered the Register of Deeds of Laguna to issue new titles under the name of the government.

How dispute began

The dispute had its beginnings on Aug. 19, 1989, when the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer of Cabuyao notified the Yulo corporation that the DAR was putting the land—with Transfer Certificate Titles 81949 and 84891—under CARP coverage and designating 85 farmers as beneficiaries.

The SRRDC contested the notice of coverage. It described the land as non-agricultural in nature and therefore not subject to the CARP, and questioned the farmers' qualifications as beneficiaries, saying they were squatters and not tenants.

Nevertheless, the DAR issued on Dec. 12, 1989, a notice of acquisition.

On Dec. 19, 1991, the Darab dismissed the SRRDC's protest for lack of merit and ordered the Land Bank of the Philippines to pay P7.8 million as compensation, which the Yulo corporation refused to accept.

The Darab also ordered the Register of Deeds of Laguna to cancel TCTs 84891 and 81949 and issue a new one in the name of the Republic of the Philippines.

The next year, the farmers received their certificates and the emancipation patents to the land.

On March 10, 1992, the SRRDC petitioned the Court of Appeals for a reversal of the Darab ruling.

But on Nov. 5, 1993, the appellate court affirmed the ruling, saying: "Being actual tillers and residents of the barangay where the parcels of land are located, the 85 farmworkers-beneficiaries are qualified beneficiaries, at least in the seventh order of priority."

Nineteen days later, the SRRDC brought the case to the Supreme Court. It said the land was exempt from the CARP because as early as 1979 it was classified as a "park" under a Cabuyao zoning ordinance approved by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board in 1980.

Citing a tribunal ruling on a 1993 case, the Yulo corporation said land not devoted to agricultural activity and converted to non-agricultural use prior to the effectivity of the CARP on June 15, 1988, were outside the coverage of the law.

It also contended that apart from being a park, the land formed part of a watershed area.

According to the SRRDC, runoff water from the disputed land drains into the Mangumit and Diezmo rivers, tributaries of the San Cristobal River that, in turn, is a tributary of Laguna Lake.

It cited a 1993 memorandum of the environment secretary saying that the area supported the water requirements of the residents as well as the industries located in nearby municipalities.

But the farmers countered that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources itself had issued a certification that "the only declared watershed in Laguna Province and San Pablo City is the Carilaya-Lumot Rivers."

They also said the 1979 municipal ordinance classifying the area as a park was repealed by Ordinance No. 94-78 on Jan. 5, 1994.

Cropland

In its ruling, the Darab said the Department of Agriculture had classified the 254.76 hectares as "cropland areas, first established as a coconut-based plantation type of agriculture," and "extensively" planted to "upland rice, corn, pineapple, root crops, vegetables, coffee, papaya, passion fruit and other fruit trees."

The farmers, in their memorandum to the Supreme Court, said the SRRDC itself had admitted that the land was agricultural. They cited a letter of Jesus Miguel Yulo, addressed to then Agrarian Reform Secretary Miriam Defensor-Santiago and dated Aug. 22, 1989, stating that the land "is presently planted to coconuts, bangkal, coffee and lanzones."

But in that letter, Yulo also said "the use of such land for ordinary agricultural activities will soon no longer be relevant" because it was "in the process of growing into a new dynamic urban-industrial area."

According to the SRRDC, the property forms part of the institutional support areas of the Canlubang Estate developed by the late Speaker Jose Yulo starting in 1948. But Darab records showed that the estate had undergone subdivision, and that the disputed 254.76 hectares were part of it before the subdivision.

In its findings, the Darab said the land was "the foundation of the Yulo Empire, which metamorphosed into several big corporations," among them the SRRDC, Canlubang Golf and Country Club, Laguna Estate and Development Corp., Canlubang Sugar Estate and eight other corporations.

She spurns money and gets better deal: A dream come true

From page A1

the toilet of one of the mall's parking lots. She immediately reported her find and brought the bag to the mall's administration office where it was discovered that it contained P500,000.

After Chinese businessman Wang Chao Wei claimed the bag, he wanted to give Sotelo a cash reward. She refused and only accepted a flower vase as a gift.

Sotelo added that she has yet to resubmit her application with the PNP but would take care of the necessary documents when "things normalize."

Since her act of honesty was reported in the media, the normally shy and soft-spoken Sotelo has had to deal with a whirlwind of ceremonies and interviews.

Yesterday, she was supposed to attend an awards ceremony at the headquarters of the National Capital Region Police Office in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig.

SOTELO MFH
LINGGUS

SOTELO

However, the ceremonies were cancelled but Sotelo reported to the mall for work anyway.

She has also become an instant celebrity in her hometown of Zarraga, Iloilo.

Also, she has yet to discuss with her superiors the possibility of leaving her present job with the Linggus Security Agency.

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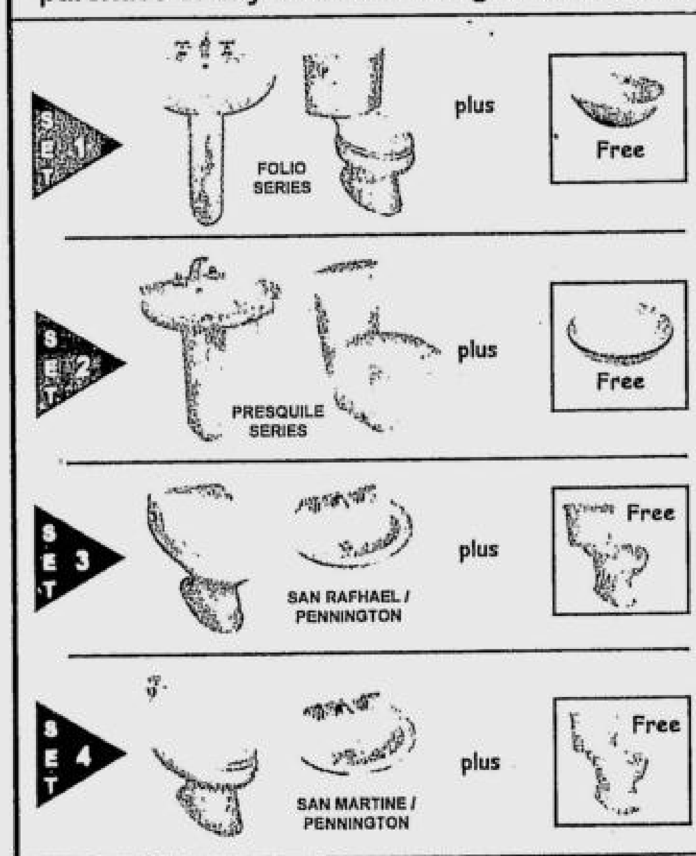

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GMA accepts Bush invitation to visit US

From page A1

sured Ms. Macapagal of his continued support for her administration and expressed admiration for her decision not to contest the 2004 presidential election.

"I am sure your decision not to seek re-election in 2004 was a difficult one, and I admire your desire to put the people of the Philippines first," he wrote.

"You have an ambitious agenda for the next year and a half, and I look forward to supporting your efforts to build a "strong republic," he continued.

While congratulating her for having made "important strides in the war against terror" on the local front, Bush reminded the President that "there is still much to be done."

He said his government would continue to assist and train Filipino soldiers "to eliminate with finality the threat from the Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist elements."

The US leader also pledged his support to the President's efforts to "strengthen the rule of law, advance economic reform, rein in fiscal deficits, and alleviate poverty."

Bush invited the President to visit the United States in the first half of the year "so we can discuss further how we can help you fulfill your vision."

Since assuming office two years ago, Ms Macapagal has made two working visits to the United States.

Important strides

The letter said that while "important strides in the war against terror in your country" have been made, "additional terrorist attacks against civilians and the resulting loss of innocent life mean there is still much to be done."

A US soldier and about two dozen Filipinos were slain and more than 200 injured in a wave of bombings blamed on Islamic militants in Manila and in the southern Philippines in October.

The attacks came after the two military allies completed a six-month anti-terror joint operation on the Basilan island that involved more than 600 US Special Forces military advisers.

Further joint training is scheduled in the southern Philippines later this month. *With a report from AFP*

US President Bush hosts a meeting with President Macapagal in 2001.

REUTERS

If it's trouble, it must be a boy

From page A1

"We don't know what the answer is," she said in an interview.

The sheer size difference between the sexes could account for longer labors and more cesarean sections but boy babies are also more likely to suffer from fetal distress which is not affected by size.

"There is obviously some sort of inherent vulnerability of male infants to the whole process of labor," she added.

Eogan and her colleagues studied data on 8,000 deliveries at the hospital between 1997 and 2000. Their research is reported in the British Medical Journal.

All the women were carrying their first child and went into labor at term spontaneously.

"In our study we have shown that complications of labor and delivery are more likely to be encountered if the woman is carrying a male rather than a female," Eogan said.

'Must be a boy'

Although male babies had more problems during labor, 71 percent of the women in the study who had boys had a normal delivery. The rate of admission to the specialist care baby unit was the same for boys and girls.

"If a woman delivers a male, regardless of how she delivers him, he is not more likely to require intensive care or medicine and the chances are she will be leaving the labor ward with her baby," said Eogan.

She added that when medical staff quip "it must be a boy" when a woman has problems during labor and delivery, they are scientifically more correct than previously thought. *Reuters*

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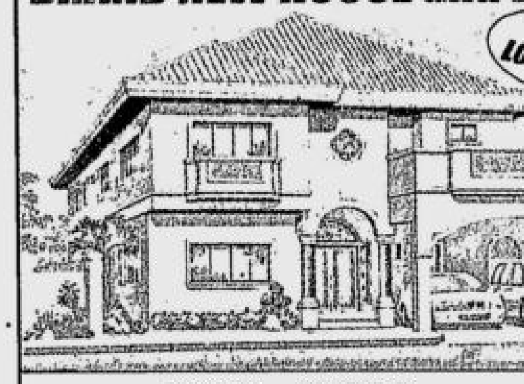

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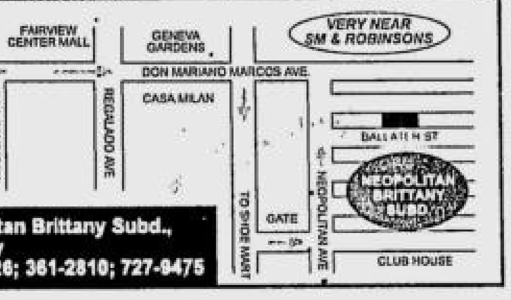

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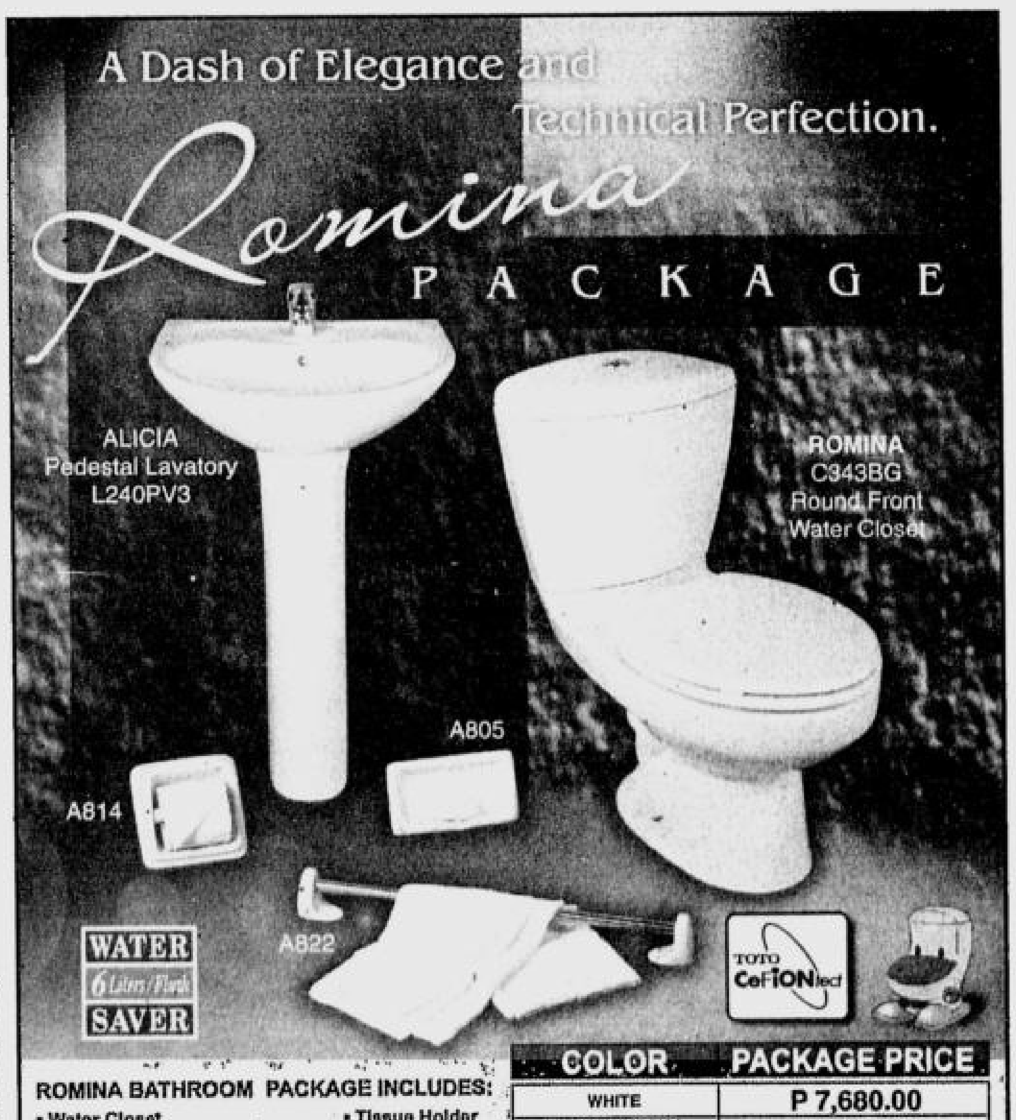
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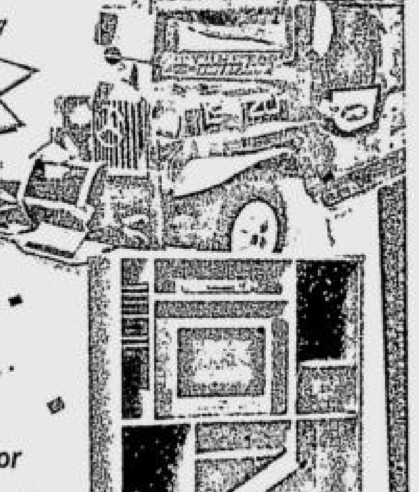

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OPINION

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Velarde's conversion

EDITORIAL

THE WITHDRAWAL of President Macapagal-Arroyo from the 2004 elections has acquired the force of a new evangelism. It has inspired a wave of renunciation of narrow, partisan political ambition and interests from such important personages as Sen. Edgardo Angara and Brother Mike Velarde, the leader of the religious group El Shaddai.

Not to be outdone by the President, Angara declared before the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines that he was not running for the presidency in 2004, and had entered into an alliance with the President within a framework of programs and issues. Bitten by what is now becoming a contagion of civic conscience, Velarde followed suit. He told reporters at the launch of a coalition of civic leaders, the Bangon Pilipino Movement (BPM), that he was not only renouncing "all political ambitions." He also echoed the President's appeal for abstention from politics, a declaration that made it difficult to determine whether both were reading from the same text or drinking from the same fountain of political inspiration.

Consider this. "I call on all Filipinos to make their own sacrifices for the common good," said Velarde. "We are too political. Everything we do is related or linked to politics." Then he went farther. He confessed, for the first time and with apparent contrition, that when politicians made pilgrimages to El Shaddai gatherings during election seasons, the reason was not that they shared a deep faith with them; all they wanted was to be seen there and thereby gain political support from him and his flock.

Velarde has seen through this, and, in what seems like an epiphany, he has now decided to apply stringent norms for participation of politicians in El Shaddai's prayer meetings. The norm is that they should be bona-fide, card-carrying members, a requirement that is usually associated with doctrinaire and disciplined organizations like the Communist Party. We don't know how long this requirement will hold, but Filipino politicians never run out of stratagems to get around rules.

Velarde's statement on the road to Damascus implies that El Shaddai's popular base is crucial for winning elections or even for keeping in power governments under siege. We have to disabuse the public's mind about this assumption. El Shaddai has never been a disciplined or monolithic movement the way the Iglesia ni Cristo is. It has never been demonstrated that its members vote as a bloc.

Exposure at El Shaddai's prayer meetings helps candidates to some degree, but a number of senatorial or congressional candidates have also been elected even if they were not backed by Velarde or they had been blacklisted by him. What's more likely is that El Shaddai members have more autonomy and flexibility on political decisions than INC members and that Velarde's decision to publicly back candidates grew out of opportunism rather than conviction. Like the INC, the El Shaddai leadership is not above declaring for any candidate based on its perception that the candidate will win. Thus, Velarde can claim that the El Shaddai is key to a candidate's election, giving the impression that the group has the power to determine electoral outcomes as well as to keep or topple regimes from power.

The cleansing of El Shaddai of the disease of politicking is, of course, a wholesome development for itself as well as the body politic that is already saturated with political interference by various religious organizations, including the Catholic hierarchy. While El Shaddai is composed also of Catholics and is being shepherded by Catholic bishops, Velarde has in the past and on his own initiative meddled in politics, probably using the hierarchy's interventions as a model. If his conversion to the "no politics" appeal of the President leads to the refocusing of El Shaddai to purely spiritual activities, his renunciation of politics can be considered one of the unexpected but important outcomes of her withdrawal from the 2004 presidential race.

Heavy burden

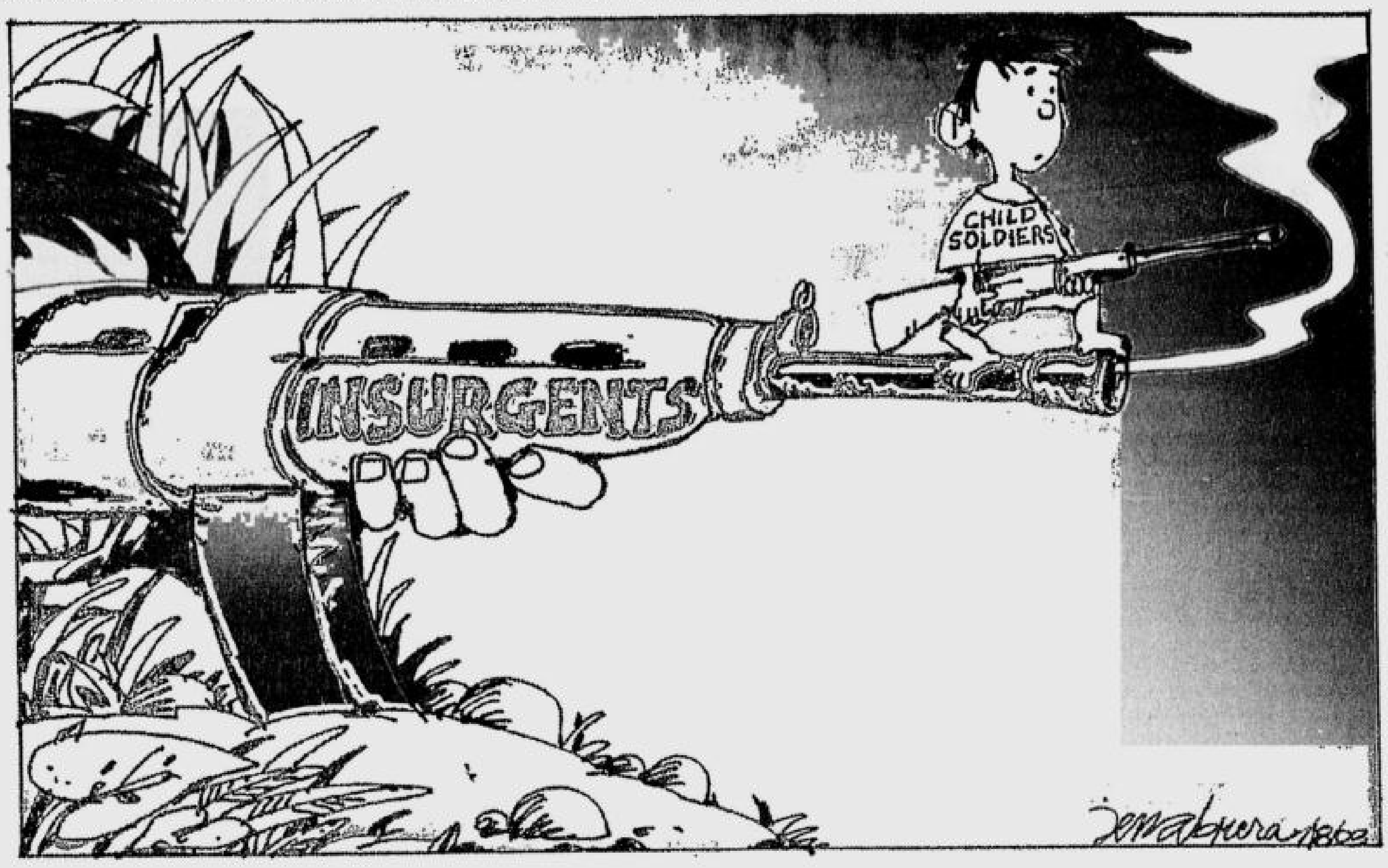
FOREIGN COMMENT

THERE is no shortage of political and economic risks hanging over the coming months, at home and abroad; but there is a shortage of chances that 2003 will end up better than expected. The pessimistic scenario almost forces itself upon us: at the beginning of February, the UN Security Council, chaired by Germany, will give in to pressure from Washington and give George W. Bush a blank check for his campaign against Saddam Hussein.

America will lead the campaign and win—militarily, at any rate. But politically, the second Gulf war will have fatal effects.

There will not be more political stability in the Middle East, but less. The world won't become safer.

When the first missile is fired against Iraqi positions, it won't just hit a few old Russian air-defense missiles, but also the heart of the Western economy. War is not good for business. War is a heavy burden for the economy. *Berliner Zeitung (Berlin, Germany)*



Nandy's crusade

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

MY friend Nandy Pacheco is nothing if not optimistic. Despite the growing number of handgun killings (including two last week), he remains undisturbed by the public indifference to the need for stricter gun control in our generally impulsive society. That billboard showing a pistol with a twisted barrel speaks volumes but very few of our leaders seem to hear its message. Still, Nandy plods on wearily, but not hopelessly, convinced of the logic of his stand.

Nandy called me up last week to comment on my column the other Saturday on "Starting anew." I had written there of the many problems confronting us this new year but ended with the hope that our current morally bankrupt leadership could be replaced by new and idealistic men and women who could lead us to the Promised Land. Nandy was not dismayed by my recital of our endless difficulties and instead took heart from my prediction of better days under a reformed government of upright citizens.

Nandy had earlier sent me a small pamphlet introducing a political movement he had organized recently called the Kapatiran sa Pangkalahatang Kabutihan (Brotherhood for the Common Welfare). It is based on its catchy slogan, Common Welfare Is Common Sense, which it is trying to spread through free car stickers. According to the pamphlet:

"Kapatiran was organized by ordinary citizens and ordinary lay faithful who can no longer sit idly by while they see the betrayal of public trust by elected and appointed public officials, man's inhumanity to man, the poor and marginalized exploited by unscrupulous politicians to promote their selfish ends, the deterioration of public and private morality, the decline of the family, high crimes rate and increased corruption in government, and who want to put an end to dirty politics."

The organization is clearly a revolt against the existing political and social order but not through violence. Rather, it aims to effect a radical change in the thinking of the people, many of whom have been seduced by the hedonist idea of pleasure and ease regardless of the cost in moral values or have yielded to the evasive conclusion that the evils of our society have already become part of our way of life that, since they cannot be corrected anymore, must be resignedly accepted.

Thus the Kapatiran warns:

"The world is full of nay-sayers—people who say it can't be done, it will never work, we're too small and insignificant, they're too powerful and on and on. These are the people who let fear conquer them and dominate their sorry lives and seem to want the same for others. But it doesn't have to be like this. There is a way out of the darkness.

"To the skeptics, the defeatists and the cynics, we say: please give us a chance—and surprise yourselves. Get aboard and join the faith journey. Every faith journey is a work of grace and grace means that God will do for us what we cannot do alone. Let's cooperate and make this happen."

I am personally attracted to this new movement because I find the attainment of its basic purposes indispensable to the thorough reformation of our society. The Kapatiran could be the instrument for the cleansing of all the putrid ideas that have made us increasingly insensitive to the ills around us and have impliedly accepted them as embedded in the national character that we have neither the will nor the capacity to change.

I am not completely convinced, however, because of the exclusive membership of the Kapatiran as reflected in its invitation. It is addressed to "ordinary people and ordinary lay people," which I understand from a reading of the entire pamphlet refers to the Catholic laity. It speaks of "we, the ordinary lay faithful who comprise about 99.97 percent of the Catholic Church in the Philippines." The obvious suggestion is that, in opening its membership to only the Catholics, all other religions are not considered worthy enough to share and pursue the objectives of the Kapatiran.

The pamphlet also speaks of "our Christian faith" and thereby also excludes Filipinos of different faiths who also aspire to improve the condition of our country through a regeneration of its morality and the purification of its political conscience. It seems to suggest that only the Catholics have the credentials to join its otherwise laudable endeavor, to the exclusion of all other Filipinos who also have the welfare of their country at heart although they do not venerate the Pope in Rome.

I am a Catholic but only by denomination. I have long stopped hearing Mass since I walked out on a priest who was enthralled by his own voice and delivered a homily for half an hour while his dutiful flock sweltered in the summer heat. Even the Sermon on the Mount was not that long. Jesus' idea of hell was in the hereafter, not in the pews.

By Nandy's strict standards as a pious parishioner, I am disqualified to join his holy socio-political crusade. It is too self-righteous for me. Nevertheless, I can assure him of my full and enthusiastic support and wish the Kapatiran the best, from the ranks of the heretics.

Risking financial isolation

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

"DON'T tell us what to do! Accept whatever law we agree to pass in our Congress. Do not expect us to adopt your law because the Philippines has a different financial system from yours. We can only act within the bounds of our laws. Don't dictate to us."

Thus, spake Zarathustra, in the guise of Manila Rep. Jaime Lopez, chair of the House committee on banks. He was addressing the Financial Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), an inter-governmental body formed, as its name implies, to combat money laundering (it has since expanded its mission to combat terrorist financing).

It includes, at the latest count, 29 member countries, including the G-7 (United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Japan and Italy), plus two organizations (the European Commission, the Gulf Cooperation Council). And here we have our own Congressman Lopez speaking with such defiance. Also it would seem, with all the courage of his ignorance. Either that, or, if he does know the implications of this "defiance"—with a total lack of responsibility.

The countries he is dismissing so cavalierly are dead serious about this business—more so now that it is not only money laundering, but also financing terrorism, that they are fighting.

Are these countries dictating to us? We can consider it that only if we don't care about the consequences of money laundering and the criminal activities it hides and encourages. We can consider it that only if we think terrorism is not a problem for us.

It is more accurate to say that the FATF, using international experts in various fields, set out 40 recommendations comprising a global framework for combating money laundering, and established 25 criteria to determine whether a country's policies and practices were consistent with this framework. Countries have been monitored starting in 2000, and those who fail to meet the criteria are included in a list of Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCT). If they do not address those deficiencies substantively, then the FATF members apply "countermeasures"—the necessary steps to ensure that their own financial systems are not infected by the money laundering and terrorism financing that may be taking place in the NCCT. In short, they will subject deficient countries to a form of financial isolation.

The countermeasures, in simple terms, are designed to discourage both financial and nonfinancial entities abroad from doing business with entities located in the deficient country, as well as establishing branches or offices in them. Bottom line: a slowdown of business activities, foreign investment and financial intermediation, which will affect all of us in general, and exporters, importers and overseas contract workers in particular.

Which is why, whether reluctantly or willingly, most other countries in the world have cooperated. Unfortunately, the Philippines has the dubious distinction of being one of the few who have stayed longest on the NCCT list.

Consider: The first list of the NCCT was published in June 2000. Fifteen countries and territories were on that list: Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Cook Islands, Dominica, Israel, Lebanon, Lichtenstein, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Philippines, Russia, St. Kitts and St. Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

In June 2001, four countries—Bahamas, Cayman, Lichtenstein and Panama—were taken off the list. The Philippines stayed on, and six new countries were added. In September that year, another two countries came in.

In June 2002, Israel, Lebanon and St. Kitts, which were on the original list, had cured their deficiencies. Hungary, which was added in June 2001, was also out. The Philippines stayed on.

In October 2002, Russia, Dominica, Marshall Islands and Niue "graduated." But not the Philippines.

Thus, as of January 2003, only four on that original list remain: the Philippines, Nauru, Cook Islands, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Good grief.

Has the FATF taken serious action against any NCCT? Yes. In December 2001, it decided to impose "countermeasures" on Nauru as a result of Nauru's failure to enact, by November 30, 2001, "appropriate amendments" to its Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA) of Aug. 28, 2001. The Philippines escaped this fate because of the AMLA it passed on Sept. 29, 2001. However, the FATF at that time pronounced that the law had a number of serious deficiencies, which is why the country still remains on the NCCT list.

Another country against which the FATF imposed countermeasures was Ukraine, as of December 2002. Nigeria escaped the same fate, because it passed a law beefing up its anti-money laundering law.

And now the FATF has imposed a deadline on the Philippines: It will impose countermeasures, if by Feb. 12, we don't correct the deficiencies in our AMLA that it listed in October of 2002. We have actually been given 17 months already.

But Jaime Lopez and Congress don't seem to care. A pox on them.

Why only now?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

EL SHADDAI leader Mike Velarde got a lot of media mileage by supporting a new citizens' coalition that proposes to monitor graft and corruption in government. Velarde was also quoted as saying he was banning politicians from sharing his stage unless they become members of his group.

The colorful leader appears to have been hit by a bolt of enlightenment a la Paul of Tarsus, but the citizens doubtless wish his conversion came during the previous administration when he not only played blind to all its excesses but seemed to wallow in them too. As the spiritual adviser of then President Joseph Estrada, Velarde wielded tremendous influence. If only he were as forthright as he is now, perhaps history would have been different. *Bakit ngayon lang*, Brother Mike?

* * *

Former President Erap recently added the name of industrialist Eduardo Cojuangco to his list of preferred candidates for the 2004 race, but the latter disclaims any interest, his nephew and House NPC chief Rep. Gilbert Teodoro assured this column. There's another indication. A reliable source said that many months back, Cojuangco recruited Ricardo Golpeo, PCSO general manager during the Erap era, to work for him, reporting to San Miguel Corp. and the United Coconut Planters Bank. Supported by Cojuangco's funds, Golpeo is said to be moving around the country organizing Sen. Panfilo Lacson's presidential campaign. The 2004 derby gets more interesting by the day.

* * *

Since both Senate President Franklin Drilon and Speaker Jose de Venecia are dear friends of mine, I feel saddened at their current strained relationship. I've seen at close range how these two leaders of Congress have interacted so harmoniously, enjoying a healthy dialogue and supporting each other so many times. I cannot recall a better rapport exhibited by any other team of Congress leaders in recent memory. For instance, when the opposition attempted last June 3, 2002 to stage a coup against Drilon, De Venecia readily adjourned the session in the House so that the new Senate majority could not unseat Drilon and pass any new legislation. It would be a loss to the nation if this special relationship were allowed to deteriorate. Talk it over, gentlemen.

* * *

Over the past weeks, the divergence of views of the two chambers on Charter change was reflected also in the relationship between their two leaders. Drilon had earlier been supportive of Charter change, but in past weeks he began taking a negative stand doubtless, due to the influence of his Senate colleagues. In fact he became critical of House members campaigning for change, which was resented by them.

The strain between the two leaders became visible again at the recent Ledac meeting in Malacañang when Makati Business Club secretary general Guillermo Luz, who was asked to attend that meeting, opined that Congress ought not to be talking about Charter change until it had finished its legislative backlog. De Venecia swiftly defended the House, arguing that the backlog was not in the House, since it had finished all pending legislation, but in the Senate where six critical bills passed by his chamber remained in limbo. Stung by this remark, Drilon stressed in a press statement that the reason for the slower passage of bills in his chamber is that it studies them very carefully. "We don't pass bills for the sake of passing them," he said.

* * *

In fairness to Drilon, it's not for want of leadership that the Senate has failed to act swiftly on crucial bills. Rather, it's because of the terrible gridlock it has suffered because of the deep rift between the majority and minority groups after Erap's ouster, which was again manifested recently in the failed coup attempt of Sen. Edgardo Angara's group.

The current hearings of the committee on government corporations and public enterprises, headed by Sen. John Osmeña, on the Impsa controversy are also reflective of this rift. The central issue here is whether Impsa received a sovereign guarantee from the government or not; the allegation of Sen. Panfilo Lacson that resigned Justice Secretary Hernando Perez received a bribe from Mark Jimenez stems from the assertion that the Macapagal administration issued this guarantee. Both Erap's former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu and Perez have said there was no such guarantee, but Osmeña does not seem eager to hear their testimony, in order to settle this issue once and for all. Instead, he prefers to call first Perez's brother-in-law Reginald Arceo and businessman Ernesto Escaler whom Jimenez implicated with Perez. The focus of the hearing is on the alleged bribe and the target is the administration.

* * *

To Charter change proponents, the current situation in the Senate is the most convincing argument for shifting to a unicameral legislature, apart from the enormous savings it will generate. On the other hand, the abolition of the Senate is perhaps the main reason senators oppose Charter change. In fact, some citizens suspect that the senators' advocacy of a constitutional convention over the more convenient constituent could be a mere gimmick to buy time.

Former Rep. Dante Tinga, now law dean of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines College of Law, warns the senators that if they are out to protect their interests, a Con-con may not be the best way to do it since they would have no control over its deliberations. On the other hand, Tinga says, the senators hold the key to the approval of amendments in a constituent assembly since it would take only six senators to reject any House initiative. Tinga adds, "The constituent assembly approach is practical and less cumbersome, apart from being less costly." I agree.

A 'heroic' film

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

NOMINATED for Monday's Golden Globe Awards as Best Foreign Film is "Hero," directed by the multi-awarded filmmaker Zhang Yimou and starring Jet Li, among other top Chinese film stars.

I assume that "Hero" will also be in the running for Best Foreign Film in the Academy Awards. If so, then I fear greatly for our own Philippine entry, the small and quiet "Mga Munting Tinig," because "Hero" has "quality" and "blockbuster" written all over it.

Supposedly based on a legend that pre-dates the founding of the first ruling dynasty in China, "Hero" satisfies and rewards the viewer in almost all aspects of moviegoing. Lush visuals and breathtaking landscapes beguile the eye, soaring music seduces the ear, the acting moves stirs the heart, the martial arts scenes excite and thrill, while the story and the script challenges the mind.

Fans of Jet Li and his onscreen calisthenics will not be disappointed with "Hero." Li plays "Nameless," a petty official in the Qin kingdom, who is brought to the presence of the ruthless king when news surfaces that "Nameless" has singlehandedly killed three legendary assassins who had come closest to killing the king.

China is still in its "Warring States" period, when the country was divided into seven feudal kingdoms, each of which desired to overwhelm the others and unite China as a single great empire. The most ruthless and the most capable of attaining this goal is the King of Qin, and it is for this reason that he has been the target of skilled and dedicated assassins.

The adversaries that "Nameless" has overcome were legends in their own time: "Sky," famous for his dazzling sword play, and "Broken Sword" and "Flying Snow," who had come closest to killing the king and managed to penetrate as far as the palace's inner sanctum.

For relieving the king of the threat of these deadly assassins, "Nameless" is rewarded with gold and land and allowed the extraordinary privilege (and security risk) of getting within 10 paces of the understandably paranoid king.

Asked to narrate the details of how he overwhelmed such renowned fighters, "Nameless" proceeds to unfold what its breathless publicity calls "an earth-shattering tale of love, honor and duty, a story that moves beyond the reaches of history. A story about what it means to be a hero."

And know what? For once, a movie's publicity falls short of its real accomplishments.

* * *

UNLIKE the rubber-faced (and nimble-bodied) Jacky Chan, Jet Li is a notoriously deadpan actor. But in "Hero," his stoicism serves his character well. His face is a blank canvas against which we are asked to judge not just the veracity of his story, but the integrity of his character as well.

The amazing pair of Tony Leung and Maggie Cheung essay the parts of the warrior-lovers "Broken Sword" and "Flying Snow." I've seen them in only one other film, Wong Kar Wai's "In the Mood for Love," but I was instantly converted into a fan, drawn into the world of feeling they created by a mere glance, a shift of expression, the tension that crackled in their mere presence.

They bring the same intensity to their roles in "Hero." Cheung is especially remarkable, conveying thoughts and feelings by movement and gesture, even as her face remains enigmatic and inscrutable.

"Crouching Tiger's" Zhang Ziyi was, I felt, underutilized as "Moon," "Broken Sword's" devoted servant. But even in this "small" role she gives her all.

* * *

LOCAL filmmakers will surely protest that "Hero" reaches such heights because it had producing muscle behind it, what with a $31-million budget to work with.

And the money poured into it shows. The special effects alone are dazzling. But one lesson that "Hero," as a movie production, conveys is that the smoke-and-mirrors of filmmaking should not be an end in themselves. Rather, they should be employed only in service of the story and script, to enhance the meaning and content, but never to take their place.

That "Hero" is a labor of love—and more than that, of patriotic pride and artistic commitment—is quite evident in the film. Only a people with a rich history and culture, and such pride and confidence in its universal appeal, could have made a movie like "Hero." There is no pandering here to commercial considerations. The martial arts scenes, for instance, are staged only to move the story and tell us something about the characters. And there is no shirking the "educational" aspect, no fudging of message or dumbing-down of the audience.

Only one thing could possibly detract from "Hero's" success here: the movie has Mandarin dialogue and English subtitles. But I tell you, "Hero" is worth sitting through this minor inconvenience.

* * *

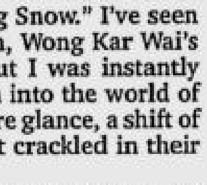
"HERO" will have its gala premiere on Feb. 1 at SM Megamall Cinema 10. Sponsor is the Anvil Executive Club, established in 1991 by young entrepreneurs from many of the country's top corporations and leading business families, and unique in that it seeks to promote "traditional Confucian values, entrepreneurial courage and civic consciousness."

The gala premiere will also serve to kick off the search for nominees for the "Anvil Prize for Courage in Public Service," which seeks to honor a person or group which has shown exceptional courage in public service. "Anvil fervently believes that selfless public service by national leaders can ensure Philippine economic and social development," organizers said.

With its themes of duty, honor, and self-sacrifice for the common good, "Hero" is certainly the perfect vehicle to jump-start a search for such a rare breed.

Some notes on 19th century Cavite

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY



Bambi L. Harper

(Some of you may be aware by now of my fascination with names, especially old ones. Since Cavite has developed into a mere suburb of Manila and its residents now come from all over, the names of local places and landmarks in the following article might have been lost. Here they are, for the record.).

* * *

SERVING as dividing line in the east and south is the cordillera of Tagaytay, from the peak of Ilong Castila to the sea in the west and from there to Pico Gonzalez, called Sungay, separating the lagoon of Taal or Bombon in the south and Manila Bay in the north.

This dense and tall sierra with deep ravines crowned by rocks and pinnacles contains a great number of uneven woodlands with abrupt central plateaus entangled in rough vegetation branching out in inextricable paths embracing the whole province. Sometimes these form great walls that serve as good lookouts.

The peaks are known as: Gonzalez, Sungay, Ilong Castila, Talisquis, Calisquis, Tumboboloy, Cay Dilao, Malagon, Bantog, Panagsagan, Tungad, Urum, Nagbas, Pilong-Sarag, Inagcrusang, Dos Picos, Pico de Loro, Cay Panganag, Calogcalo-gan.

From those heights the incline descends sharply to the north in irregular slopes, slowly diminishing, initiating from the top a multitude of deep gorges that start off dry, but after two or three kilometers springs appear and continue pouring water always between vertical edges of abundant and heavy vegetation, making paths dangerous and later forming rivers and currents that fertilize the plains.

The incline that borders the sea has a series of smoothly undulating elevations. Some of them—Mataas na Lupa, San Nicolas, Navarro, San Guillermo, Talutud, Alapan—rise up like crests resembling isolated forts between the plains of irrigated land.

The first zones, from Sungay until you descend to the mountain towns of Cavite, are covered with herbaceous vegetation and some rattan, known locally as *catalagiban*. Following this zone is another grove with a succession of cogon fields, forests, cane plantations and rice paddies that extend to Paliparang.

Descending from Buenavista are the towns of San Francisco de Malabon and Santa Cruz, dry terrain that soon disappears, replaced by irrigated rice paddies that run for some eight kilometers surrounded by huge clamps of bamboo and fruit-bearing trees until the barrio of Calibuyo. The rest of the land up to Silang and Indang is occupied by mountains of varying density with small grazing areas.

Between Salitran and Paliparan is a large tract of cogon alternating with wood land called La Fandanguera. Cogon fields and forests are also found on the banks of the rivers that form the Zapote and those that run to Laguna de Bay.

As you leave the casa-hacienda in Salitran going northeast, you see land planted to rice, reaching close to the town of Bacoor. A parallel area runs from Perez Dasmariñas and ends in Binacayan encompassing all of Imus. Between these zones are the low hills of San Nicolas, covered in cogon, as well as the river Querapdap and its tributary, Limbong. The scenery soon shifts to rice paddies and orchards as you approach San Nicolas.

Around the town of Bacoor are extensive salt paddies two kilometers wide and reaching the mangroves surrounding the landing at the river of Imus and running through the barrio of Binacayan continuing on to Cavite Viejo. These constitute the most extensive mangroves in the province up to Noveleta and Lictong Rosario. An infinity of streams, in many places un-navigable, cut through this zone of mangroves that end in the narrow isthmus that unites terra firma with the sandy peninsula of Tanguay where you find Caridad, San Roque and the capital, Cavite.

Due to the sinuous and labyrinthine of caves, crevices and ravines that jump, run and precipitate, the springs, rivers and sonorous arroyos, the steep cordillera of Tagaytay is a dangerous trek and not for the faint-hearted. Among those that bring their waters to Bay are El Alagao or Bitucang-Manok (Tripa de Gallina) and El Tibay which starts from the barrio of Puting-Cahoy and cuts across the south from the garrison of Sto. Domingo.

El Lumbia appears on the outskirts of the visita Pulong-Bunga, merging with those of Puting-Cahoy and Jucay, along which an arroyo flows that is its tributary, reuniting near the garrison and proceeding on its long journey until it reaches Corral-na-Bato, which is enlarged by another arroyo called Boal, and burying itself in La Laguna on the site of its confluence with the Binambangan and Lusacan rivers that water Gulugut-babuy.

Another river is Calabozo, which starts from barrio Caon and ends near Biñang. Munting-Ilog starts from the visita Ulila, passes through the elevation of Mataas na Lupa, cuts through Carmona and Silang between forests and rocky thickets and leaves the province near Cabilan-baybay.

Malaquing Ilog or El Rio Grande originates southwest of Pulong-Bunga, runs parallel to Munting Ilog, cuts through Santo Domingo and Carmona to Silang, receiving left and right the waters of five rivulets. These add considerably to its current. Malaqueng Ilog is also known as Amaya and becomes Rio Isidro once it passes Pahalang. It leaves the province through Bacot-nabato and empties itself into San Pedro de Tunasan on the coast of Laguna de Bay.

(Data from D. Federico Monteverde y Sedano's, "Campaña de Filipinas," 1897)

Missing Mt. Kitanglad

YOUNG BLOOD

Amai Bulalacao

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I AM a lumad. I am a descendant of the warrior tribe of Magahats in Bukidnon. And I felt very proud when GMA 7's "The Probe Team" featured Mt. Dulang Dulang, a part of the Kitanglad mountain ranges.

I used to roam near these mountains when I was still a kid. I grew up in their shadow together with the other kids in our tribal community. And I was very lucky to have been asked by my uncle to join them on their hunting expeditions at a young age.

My uncle was a sharpshooter so we seldom went home empty-handed. Besides, my uncle's three hounds were excellent hunters. After the hunt, we would bring home wild boar, deer, *kalasanon* (wild chicken) or monkeys. Sometimes, these game animals were caught in traps set by my uncle in the thick forest.

All that happened when I was still a kid. I left the place when I enrolled in high school, although sometimes I spend my vacation there.

In our community a lot of things have changed. For one, the mountain ranges that we, the indigenous tribes, consider our home have been declared a national park. We claim the land and its surrounding areas as our ancestral domain. But repressive laws today like the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) threaten us.

The government says it wants to protect the natural resources in these areas. But well before Magellan came to this archipelago, our ancestors already knew how to protect these mountain ranges. Mt. Kitanglad has been the home of our tribe for centuries now. So the government need not tell us what to do.

The Nipas law prohibits us from doing things that are part of our tradition. We are forbidden to hunt. We are forbidden to have a *sakum* (kaingin) on our ancestral land, which is at the foot of the mountains. It's like telling us to stop breathing!

What is rational anyway about protecting game animals and trees more than those of us who have protected the mountains for centuries now?

We know that Mt. Kitanglad has the largest watershed in Mindanao. Even before our ancestors knew that, our tribe already felt responsible for protecting the mountains. In fact, these mountains are sacred for us. And now the government is telling us to stay away from these mountains because it will take care of it?

If the lawmakers who passed the laws had only bothered to study history they would have known better. Our tribe has lived in these mountains for centuries by hunting and farming in our traditional ways. And, look, these beautiful mountains remain as grandiose and bountiful as ever! How dare they tell us, "Go away because the government will preserve this place"?

Since our tribe has been the genuine protector of these mountains, we know very much who are the people who profane our sacred sanctuary. Many of them are lowlanders who were sponsored by the government (and of course the greedy colonizers) to rob us of our ancestral rights. They came from many parts of the Visayas and even from as far as Northern Luzon. By exploiting the ignorance of some of our tribesmen, they made themselves rich. They grabbed large tracts of land. They even became mayors, governors and congressmen.

So if the government would ask as to stay away from the mountains, then it is but right that we also demand that these carpetbaggers be driven back to their places.

But we will not do that because we are a peace-loving people. Instead, we expect the government to respect our right to these areas. To deprive us of this right is to declare war on our people. But before anyone forgets, we are descendants of a warrior tribe.

I miss Mt. Kitanglad. And I wish to go home soon.

Away from home

IT'S New Year's Eve and 11 p.m. Being away from home dampens the festive mood.

To ease my burden, I escape from my prison in our dilapidated dormitory. My destination is the 7-Eleven store a few blocks away.

Well, it is just like any ordinary night there. The moment I enter I see the same three people keeping vigil for insomniacs like me. I buy a cup of coffee and a piece of *siopao* and sit outside to watch the fireworks. I can hear firecrackers exploding, their noise getting louder as the clock approaches midnight.

Amid the noise and revelry, my thoughts carry me back to a small hut in a remote barrio at the foot of a mountain range. I seem to hear the echo of the bamboo cannon my cousin Uto has made. I seem to smell the scent of coffee my mother is brewing. And I can almost taste the *pansit-bihon* and the *suman* she is preparing. Then I can see Tatang looking at the stars to find out what the new year will bring.

I am jolted back to the present when a *superlolo* explodes in front of me. The guard laughs when he sees how frightened I am.

"Happy New Year," he greeted me.

"So this is it?" I tell myself. "This is my New Year?"

The air is now heavy with smoke. I decide to go inside and buy another cup of coffee.

Loneliness left me when I realize I am not alone. If I wasn't able to spend New Year's Eve with my family, I tell myself, so did these *tinderos* and *tindera*.

I wish them a happy New Year and they respond happily. Seconds later, we are chatting like longtime friends. I guess our common experience of being away from home on New Year's Eve broke down the barrier between us. We share jokes and laugh, although it's obvious we are just trying to console ourselves.

Our conversation is interrupted when customers arrive to buy beer, ice, cigarettes, etc.

At 2 a.m. I decide to leave. My feet are heavy as I trek back to my prison in our dilapidated dormitory.

There is really no place like home. Especially on New Year's Day.

Amai Bulalacao, 21, is a BS Chemical Engineering student at the University of the Philippines Los Baños. He is a Talaandig.

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A light to the world

LETTERS

WE stepped into the church and it was old and a bit dark. Mass had just begun. We didn't know what to expect in Istanbul, Turkey.

I guess we expected it to be a somber Mass, but quiet and somber it was not. I thought I heard angels joyously singing behind me. The voices were rich, melodic and beautiful.

What I discovered as I turned around to look did not surprise me because I had seen and heard the same thing in other churches around the world. It was not a choir of angels but a group of Filipino Catholics wearing smiles on their faces as they worshipped God and sang his praises.

I had seen this many times before—in Rome, in Israel, in the United States and other countries. Filipinos have special traits and they are beautifully expressed.

What are the special traits which characterize these happy people? I will share a few that I have noticed as I traveled around the world, including the Philippines.

First, there is a sense of community, of family. These Filipino Christians did not sit apart from each other. They sat together, closely. They didn't just sing quietly, mumbling, or simply mouthing the words. No, they raised their voices in harmony together as though they enjoyed the sense of unity and communion among them. They are family even if they are not related.

Second, they have an inner peace and joy which is rare in the world today. When most of the world's citizens are worried and fretful, I have found Filipinos to have joy and peace and a deep sense of God's love being lavished upon them.

Third, there is a love for God and for his Son Jesus that is almost synonymous with the word Filipino. There is also something that Filipinos are famous for around the world: their love for the Blessed Mother. Among the many Filipinos I have met, the affectionate title for Mary I always hear from their lips is "Mama Mary."

My hope and prayer, while I am here in the Philippines sharing my conversion story from Baptist Protestant to Roman Catholic, is that the Filipino people will continue to keep these precious qualities. I pray that they will continue loving their families, loving the Catholic Church, reading the Bible, loving Jesus, his Mother and the Eucharist.

As many other religions and sects try to persuade them to leave the Church, may God give them wisdom to defend the Catholic faith. As the world tempts them to sin and seek only money and fame and power, may God grant them the serenity to always remember that obedience to Christ and love for God are far more important than all the riches the world can offer.

May the wonderful Filipino people continue to be a light of the Gospel to the whole world!

—STEVE RAY
c/o Defensores Fidei Foundation,
Suite 1402, 1st e-Bank Tower,
8737 Paseo de Roxas,
Salcedo Village, Makati City

Insult to truth and accuracy

AS members of the Mad Dog Motorcycle Club (60 percent Filipinos and 40 percent foreigners), we recognize that some people disagree with our lifestyle and speak against it. We expect, however, that any narration of events should be factual and that any statements for publication be verified as truthful.

Evelyn Bondoc, who claims to be from from Talisay, Daet, accuses us of desecrating the persons and reputation of ladies from her town by auctioning them off as chattel or slaves. She refers to us as "barbarians" and purveyors of "inhuman acts" and demands an apology from us to the women of Daet and our wives. She says she has reported us to the New People's Army which will now exact revenge supposedly for the injured womanhood of Camarines Norte.

It is an interesting story, but alas, it is an insult to the truth and accuracy. The MDMC categorically denies the incidents alleged in the letter.

On Dec. 6, 2002 the club members left Manila for Daet, at the express invitation of the governor of Camarines Norte and the Daet Motorcycle Club. Due to a minor accident, we arrived in Daet late in the afternoon and were unable to meet with the governor. However, we were housed at the Provincial Guest House and met by the Daet Motorcycle Club and a representative of the Provincial Tourism Office.

Due to our number, we could not all be accommodated at the guest house, so some of our members were escorted to a beach resort. The accommodations were simple but comfortable and the food was excellent.

After a short rest, all the members of our club and the Daet Motorcycle Club had dinner at the resort, to which the latter brought their wives and girlfriends. Dinner ended at about 9:30 p.m., after which those of us who wanted to go out were escorted by members of the Daet Motorcycle Club to some night spots. We then retired to our respective hotels.

The next morning, we were sent off by the provincial tourism officer who gave us souvenirs. The local motorcycle club escorted us all the way to the diversion highway. We went away with the highest regard for the province of Camarines Norte and the people of Daet.

We have receipts for our stay in Daet, and witnesses, including the owner of the resort, who will swear that: (1) There was no raffle of girls at the resort; (2) we were not drunk since we had to ride home the next day; and (3) our conduct was at all times respectful of the people of Daet. If necessary we can present affidavits to support this statement.

We are giving an address where we can be served summons, if anyone wishes to bring us to court.

We dare Evelyn Bondoc to do more than just hurl threats and libelous accusations against us.

—RANDY EARMAN, president,
Mad Dog Motorcycle Club Inc.,
Pasong Tamo corner
Davila Streets, Makati City

Advantages of letting Fernando wear two hats

THE APPOINTMENT of Bayani Fernando as public works secretary in concurrent capacity with his chairmanship of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority is the best example of how government agencies can be managed effectively by a good administrator. It will enable Fernando, who has his own management style, to achieve more.

Obviously, the DPWH's projects to improve the flow of commerce from the provinces to Metro Manila and vice versa will be futile without improving Metro Manila's traffic, which Fernando is addressing with some success.

As DPWH head, Fernando is in a better position to negotiate with officials of Quezon Province to find a landfill that will provide a long-term solution to Metro Manila's garbage disposal problem, which could be a lasting legacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

With Fernando's no-nonsense management style, the DPWH would attract more capable and better capitalized contractors which can arrange private financing to hasten the completion of projects handicapped by lack of funds, thus giving Congress a longer period to program appropriations.

When annual appropriations are assured for deferred payment of contracts as in the payment of foreign debts, it would be easier to get long-term financing for DPWH projects from government and private financial institutions. Since the latter can borrow at low interest rates, the government can avoid borrowing at high interest rates and let the GFIs finance infrastructure projects. This will help narrow the budget deficit at the same time.

—FRANK WENCESLAO,
92 Mindanao Ave., QC

Appeal for a small town in Antique

WE come from a small town, Pandan, in Antique.

The President visited our town on April 25, 2002, to declare it as part of a sanctuary for endangered species, flora and fauna. Now we are requesting that the declaration be modified to include the inhabitants of our town.

Ours is a small community of 27,000 people. Most are poor and mainly rely on the sea for their food. Farming is marginal since the arable land is small, bounded by the sea and the mountain.

We say that the inhabitants are endangered because the National Power Corp. is planning to transfer its 12-year-old diesel power plant in Batangas to one of our coastal barangays. The people rallied against it. They presented signatures from all the barangays, saying no to Napocor.

However, it seems that their protest has fallen on deaf ears. Our town officials are so enamored of the promises of Napocor and whatever they may be, we do not know.

The diesel plant is the worst kind of power plant, second only to coal. It is being phased out and replaced by geothermal and solar power plants all over the world.

This diesel plant will pollute the sea and our rivers. It will bring acid rain. Air pollution will increase the incidence of TB, asthma and other respiratory diseases in our town. It will poison the sea and the pristine beaches, the people's sources of food. Fish, seashells and other sea organisms will die. And slowly our people, their children and their children's children will slowly die, too.

It is being said that the townspeople cannot do anything because people in high places are behind the project. We do not know the identity of this person. or persons who are highly connected.

We therefore implore the President's kind help in stopping Napocor from pushing through its hideous project of poisoning and killing our flora and fauna and also indirectly the inhabitants of our small town.

We are natives of Pandan, now residing in the United States. Our blood relatives live there, and Pandan is where we will retire in the near future.

—WITH 27 SIGNATORIES,
Pandan residents living
in the United States

Service that stinks

I WONDER why Las Piñas City was considered as one of the cleanest cities in the metropolis. It's true that in order to enhance the city's image, most of the time the main streets are cleaned by collecting garbage regularly, but the side streets are forgotten.

It's sad that this is happening in this city, but the restiveness of residents over the garbage problem is mounting, if it has not boiled over already, particularly in Golden Gate Subdivision. I don't have to enumerate the effects of this kind of neglect of a basic and vital service like garbage disposal.

Garbage collection in the subdivision is very poor. You would be lucky if the garbage truck shows up once a week. If that happened, you are relieved of the oppressive odor of accumulated trash and the assault of flies at meal time.

When I visited a friend in a nearby Parañaque subdivision, I was amazed when he told me that garbage was not a concern because it's regularly collected, at least in their area. They even have the scheme for separating biodegradable and non-biodegradable trash. I wonder why the mayor of Las Piñas can't implement the same scheme.

I am not surprised when my neighbors declared that what a garbage truck (proudly announcing it as a "Project of: Nene Aguilar") carries is comparable to the mayor's quality of service to his constituents.

—JEREMY
MANLUTAC,
jerry_manlutac@
yahoo.com

Showbiz folk exhibiting greed

THE STRONG lobby by actors, professional athletes and other entertainers against the government's plan to start imposing the expanded value added tax (EVAT) is a very clear indication that these performers have become as greedy and selfish as most of their elders in Congress.

For the longest time, this privileged class has been exempted from paying the 10 percent EVAT. The figures contained in a report released by the Department of Finance showed that non-salaried professionals (composed of actors, singers, radio and TV broadcasters, choreographers, directors and professional athletes) who made more than P1 trillion in 1997 paid only P15 billion or less than 2 percent of their total income.

In contrast, salaried income earners paid more than P61 billion in taxes in 2001 or 10.6 percent of their total income.

This explains why these entertainers can maintain a fleet of luxury cars and more than one family while the ordinary taxpayers continue to groan under low salaries made more insignificant by the withheld taxes and other taxes for goods and services they buy in this country.

The rabid opposition of these entertainers show that they have become as greedy as their elders in Congress who have forgotten that they owe their status and fat perks to the people (the fans). At the very least, they should stand by them by paying their share in the cost of running the government.

As for Sen. Ralph Recto and Rep. Jules Ledesma, chairpersons of the Senate and House ways and means committee who have filed separate bills permanently exempting professionals from VAT, their actions only prove that their loyalty to their constituents end where their wives' interests begin.

—ED DAMES,
23 Bagong Anyo St.,
De Castro Subdivision
Sta. Lucia, Pasig City

Berroya's old charges vs Lacson

THE LATEST attempt of Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya to besmirch the name of Sen. Panfilo Lacson by linking him to the abduction and murder of two women relatives of slain Red Scorpion gang leader Alfredo "Joey" de Leon is, to say the least, deplorable. This obviously follows the pattern of "dirty jobs" and lies being spread by detractors of the senator in a desperate move to destroy his image.

This time Berroya claimed that Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña, who was killed in Cavite recently, told him in confidence the senator's role, as then chief of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission Task Force Habagat, in the slaying of De Leon's relatives in 1993.

Viña was never a member of the PACC and therefore it is highly improbable for him to have had any knowledge of Task Force Habagat's affairs. Viña only came to work with Lacson in the middle of 1999 when he was recommended by Cavite Gov. Irineo "Ayong" Maliksi to serve in the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

It is unfortunate that Berroya had to desecrate the memory of Viña just to vilify the name of Lacson.

The records will also show the inaccuracy of Berroya's allegation that Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao, as a member of Task Force Habagat, carried out the abduction of De Leon's relatives. Mancao was chief of the Criminal Investigation Service in Bulacan at the time.

Likewise erroneous was the INQUIRER's report that Lacson approached Blanquita Pelaez, the blacklisted PNP supplier, to assure her of payment for the 1996 handcuffs deal in exchange for her support in his bid for the top PNP post in 1999. Why would Lacson approach anyone for support when he honestly believed in then President Joseph Estrada's wisdom to choose a PNP chief based on merits and credentials?

Lacson decided not to honor the revisions in the PNP contract with Pelaez for the greater interest of the public since it would have forced the government to shoulder the taxes and import duties on the purchased handcuffs.

—GERRY E. DE BELEN,
media relations officer,
Office of Sen. Panfilo Lacson

Promise and opportunity

COMMENTARY

Mario Taguiwalo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's Dec. 30 declaration has a direct impact on the immediate 18-month period from now, January 2003, until the assumption of a next administration in July 2004.

The December 30 Movement is not primarily about the President or support for Ms Macapagal. It is about affirming that our country should be focused on seeking substantial reforms that can be realized during the remainder of the President's term. This is not about slavish acceptance of any and all of the President's actions while she is in power. This is about engaging her to use the powers of her presidency to benefit the nation rather than to advance her political ambitions (which she has nobly cast aside), but also not to advance the self-serving interests of other political personalities and factions circling like so many vultures around her political carcass (which she has not yet fully cast aside).

That Ms Macapagal is our President till June 2004 is a given fact. That she has withdrawn from pursuing the presidency in the 2004 elections is a new fact that offers a large measure of credible hope that the remainder of her term would be devoted principally and even solely for the nation's, rather than the politicians', agenda. This is the hope which the December 30 Movement seeks to nourish and upon which it seeks to build public support and participation.

We do not support the President with our eyes closed, minds asleep, hearts frozen or memories erased, despite her admirable act of casting aside her political ambition. We would be stupidly sentimental if we suddenly became the President's unquestioning followers and supporters in 2003 simply because she has declared that she is no longer running in an election. That would be like gorging ourselves with food for which we have no appetite or intention of eating later.

What we support is the promise and opportunity to pursue the three priorities she put forward last Dec. 30: economic recovery, healing the nation's divisions and assuring clean and honest elections in 2004. The President herself considers these three as more urgent and important than her own personal political plans. She has said since then that these priorities were always important to her administration even before Dec. 30. Since she has given up her own political interests to pursue them better, we citizens should be similarly willing to give up whatever it was that prevented us (for example, doubts, suspicions, reservations or contrary opinions) from fully supporting her previous efforts along these lines.

We are now more willing to act vigorously to support those actions serving these three priorities because the President has removed one major source of drag, which is our reluctance to grant her the halo of success if there was a possibility that she would appropriate it to win the 2004 elections.

Our politicians want us to believe that the nation's interests can only be served when their desire to secure power is advanced. These politicians tell us in so many different ways that the nation can progress only when they are elected or appointed or become the majority or get into Malacañang. We citizens also act like politicians when we individually or through our groups assert that our nation can only advance if our views prevail, our interests are protected, our specific causes advanced or our biases respected.

Some politicians are better than others just as some citizens are better than others in actually serving the common interests. But pursuing competing demands for narrow purposes under an administration that has a weak electoral mandate and led by a President who is unable to cobble together a stable governing coalition is a formula for gridlock and stalemate. This is the gridlock and stalemate we might be able to break at least for the next 18 months until the 2004 elections deliver to us a new set of leaders with a clear mandate to lead our country.

Our politicians still have to make their own sacrifices in order to deliver more results in pursuit of these three priorities. But they will not do so willingly and will try to exploit the President's withdrawal from the race by replacing one narrow selfish political interest with another equally narrow and selfish political interest, whether it is other so-called "presidentiables" or Cha-cha. We citizens will have to set them right.

But first, we ourselves need to make our own sacrifice by momentarily seeking to integrate the many right, just and true causes and advocacies we are pursuing now in order to connect them as much as possible with our government and other sectors of society who want to support the three priorities identified by President Macapagal. We should be willing to deploy our energies and resources in support of those specific elements in any of the three priorities which we believe will be of real benefit to the nation. While there may be other actions we deem to be more important or even vital, we should refrain from demanding their inclusion in the government's agenda as a condition for our support for those actions deserving our support.

Before Dec. 30, we might have been justified in linking our political support for the President's policies to certain conditions. This tendency was based on a well-founded perception that our support would be useful for her political ambitions later. Now that she has given up those ambitions in favor of the three priorities we ourselves recognize as beneficial to the country, we would already be self-destructive if we persisted on demanding that she first apply the powers of her presidency to our chosen causes before we give our support. Such a "tough love" stance may be a prescription for continued gridlock and stalemate.

The December 30 Movement wants to strengthen the President's hand so that she can act with vigor, decisiveness and wisdom on the three priorities for which she gave up her 2003 prospects. The movement will refrain from overloading the train of reform with other causes and additional agenda items, in favor of getting the train moving as quickly and as far as possible in pursuit of the three priorities in the next 18 months. This is not an opportunity for redefining, enhancing or expanding the agenda of reform, rather this really is an opportunity for initiating, realizing or securing progress and maybe even some breakthroughs on the few priorities already on the table.

Mario Taguiwalo is a member of pagbabago@pilipinas (p@p), a movement composed of young leaders in various fields of endeavor that was part of the organizing committee of the December 30 Movement or the 12:30 Movement.

Large-scale estafa filed vs couple in P70-B 'pyramid' scam

By Michael L. Ubac

A FORMAL complaint for large-scale swindling or estafa was filed with the Department of Justice on Thursday against the couple who owns Multinational Investors Corp. (Multitel).

Rosario and Saturnino Baladjay, currently in hiding, are being sued by 26 complainants representing 1,300 investors in connection with a P70 billion "pyramiding" scam.

The aggrieved parties said they poured a total of P471 million into the "get-rich quick" scheme which started in 1998. But according to Yolanda Baladjay, married to Saturnino's brother, the couple actually duped close to one million people with combined investments of P70 billion.

She herself invested P1.5 million, Yolanda said.

A few other victims earlier filed separate criminal charges before various regional trial courts against the Baladjays' "conduits."

The 26 complainants organized themselves into the Rising Alliance Against Business Scam (Rabs). Nora Mendoza said the group wanted the DOJ to handle preliminary investigation of the case.

Also named in the seven-page complaint were Edgard Smith, Vanya Galos and Roberto Hernandez—shareholders , directors and officers of Multitel—and 20 other suspected accomplices.

Rosario and Saturnino are president and vice-president of the corporation, and the biggest shareholders.

The complaint said Multitel was originally registered as Ariolite Enterprises International, a "lending investor."

However, it said, the firm "solicited and accepted investments from the public, promising to pay very lucrative interest rates of from 4 percent to 15 percent monthly."

Rosario allegedly told prospective investors that the money was going into a telecommunications business.

The complainants said their were told that Multitel's mother company, Multinational Lending Corp. was based in New York. They soon learned there was no such firm anywhere.

Suspected pedophile recaptured

THE BUREAU of Immigration seized an alleged American pedophile who went into hiding after he was granted bail by the agency.

Randy Lee Campbell was picked up at the Roy's Bar and Restaurant on Fields Avenue in Angeles City Thursday night by agents led by Ansari Macaayan.

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo said that Campbell has been in the BI's most wanted list since September 2001, when he was released on bail.

Campbell is facing charges of child abuse after several minors accused him of sexually molesting them.
Blanche S. Rivera

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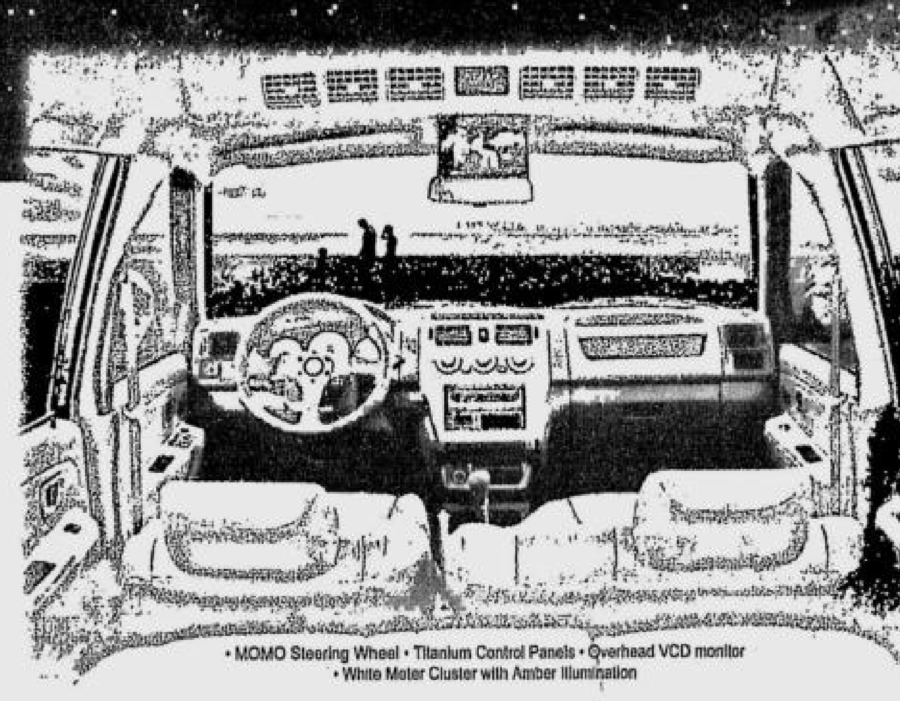

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Inspectors find empty chem'l warheads

BAGHDAD—UN arms inspectors Thursday found 11 empty chemical warheads at an Iraqi munitions dump, but the Iraqis claimed they were not linked to any prohibited weapons and a UN source called them insignificant.

UN spokesperson Hiro Ueki said the empty warheads, found in one of a large group of bunkers built in the late 1990s, appeared in "excellent condition" and were undergoing X-ray and chemical analyses.

He would not comment on the significance of the find by the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission team, saying the warheads were "similar to ones imported by Iraq during the late 1980s."

But a UN source said on condition of anonymity that the discovery, at the Ukhaider Ammunition Storage Area 70 km south of the southern city of Kerbala, was "not a significant issue by itself."

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was meanwhile weighing whether to send up to four additional aircraft carrier groups to the Gulf as the next stage of a burgeoning military buildup.

And Pentagon officials confirmed reports that anti-missile Patriot missile batteries and some 800 US Marines were in Israel, a prime target for Iraq's scud missiles during the 1991 Gulf War.

Back in Baghdad, Gen. Hossam Mohammed Amin, chief of the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate, said the empty warheads found were "just artillery rockets imported in 1986 . . . they are expired, they cannot be used since a long time ago."

The US government said it was not surprised at the discovery.

"Chemical munitions were one of the major areas we said was unaccounted for" in Iraq's weapons declaration to the United Nations in December, said State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher. "So I'm not too surprised."

Elsewhere in Iraq, inspectors were seen visiting the Baghdad homes of two scientists, taking one of them away with box bursting with documents.

Ueki confirmed the visits, saying "some documents related to past proscribed activities, dating from the early 1990s, were taken for further evaluation."

Chief UN arms inspector Hans Blix, in Brussels to brief European Union officials, said he expects the UN Security Council to ask for a second report on Iraq in February amid US moves to hold arms inspections to a tight timetable.

Blix is scheduled to present a first progress report to the Security Council on Jan. 27—seen up to now as a crucial date after which the United States could act on its threat of war against Iraq.

He also warned Baghdad it was not doing enough to prove it no longer had banned weapons, and called Iraq's situation "very dangerous."

"We feel that Iraq must do more than they have done so far in order to make this a credible avenue," he said.

Blix's comments sent world oil prices soaring to their highest levels in two years, with benchmark Brent crude rising 48 cents to $31.70 a barrel in London trading.

His remarks were echoed by Mohamad ElBaradei, head of the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency, which jointly supervises the Iraq inspections.

In Moscow for talks, ElBaradei said Iraq must "do everything possible to demonstrate that they are clean of weapons of mass destruction as early as possible."

But he said he would ask the Security Council for the inspectors to be given more time to complete their work. *AFP*

Chavez asks UN chief's help in ending crisis

UNITED NATIONS/CARACAS—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Thursday asked UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to help end his country's political and economic crisis caused by an opposition strike that is throttling vital oil exports.

The left-wing leader met the UN chief in New York a day after Latin American presidents agreed to set up a six-nation "group of friends" to reinforce efforts to break the deadlock in the world's No. 5 oil exporter.

Foes of the populist Chavez, who want him to resign and hold early elections, are maintaining a 46-day-old strike that has slashed Venezuela's oil production and shipments and jolted world oil markets.

The shutdown has pushed the country's economy further into recession and caused shortages of gasoline, cooking gas and some food items. Supporters and opponents of Chavez have clashed with increasing frequency and violence on the streets.

At a news conference after meeting Annan, Chavez welcomed the creation on Wednesday of the "friends" group, comprising the United States, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Spain and Portugal.

The six "friends" will back efforts by Organization of American States (OAS) Secretary General Cesar Gaviria to broker a peace settlement between Chavez's government and its foes.

Former paratrooper Chavez, who was elected in 1998 and survived a brief coup in April, said Annan had agreed to send a personal envoy to take part in the peace negotiations.

Chavez suggested the "friends" group be widened to include countries such as Russia, France and China, as well as Algeria, which like Venezuela is a member of the oil exporters' cartel OPEC.

"The group should be expanded and that's what I told the (UN) Secretary General," Chavez said. "I'm sure that once it's set up, this group can help Venezuela." Venezuelan opposition leaders in Caracas, who have accused Chavez of deliberately blocking and dragging out talks on an electoral solution, also welcomed the formation of the group.

"We think the 'friends group' is an excellent idea, as long as it backs Dr Gaviria," Americo Martin, a negotiator for the Coordinadora Democratica opposition coalition, told Reuters.

After more than two months, the OAS-brokered talks have failed to break the deadlock between Chavez, who refuses to quit and has vowed to break the strike, and opponents, who accuse him of dragging Venezuela toward Cuba-style communism. *Reuters*

PECKING ORDER REUTERS

Germany's Jorg Probst performs with his animals—a donkey, a goat, a monkey and a cockerel—at the 27th international circus festival of Monte Carlo, Jan. 16. Some 28 groups from all around the world will compete for the "golden clown" award, from Jan. 16 to 23.

S. Korea's Roh urges US to talk to North

SEOUL—South Korean president-elect Roh Moo-hyun urged the United States on Friday to open talks with communist North Korea to try to solve the peninsula's nuclear crisis.

And in a sign Washington is eager to end a standoff that has become a distraction from its campaign to disarm Iraq, a senior US official said he saw hope for a diplomatic solution.

Adding to the flurry of diplomatic activity to calm an escalating crisis that has raised fears about just how it will end, a Russian envoy landed in Beijing on Friday en route to Pyongyang, saying he was optimistic about his delicate mission.

"South Korea needs to convince North Korea to give up its nuclear development program," Roh told a gathering of US and European business leaders in Seoul.

"In order to convince North Korea, there needs to be dialogue between North Korea and the United States. I would like to urge the United States to actively pursue dialogue with North Korea." The White House had no immediate comment on Roh's proposal, But James Moriarity, senior director for Asian affairs at the US National Security Council, said he saw hope for a peaceful outcome.

Asked on a visit to Tokyo if he was optimistic about resolving the crisis, he told Reuters: "Yes, we hope we are going to achieve a diplomatic and peaceful solution to the issue." The crisis erupted last October when Washington said Pyongyang had admitted to pursuing a nuclear weapons program and it escalated as North Korea expelled International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors, pulled out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and threatened to resume missile tests.

Roh said he saw "no need to worry" too much, apparently seeking to play down remarks a day earlier by Defense Minister Lee Jun who said South Korea was prepared for the "worst-case scenario" of war between the North and the United States.

"I will closely consult with Japan, China, Russia and the EU and other countries while continuing to convince Pyongyang to give up its nuclear program," Roh said.

Returning to his campaign theme that Seoul's 50-year-old alliance with the United States needed to be updated to reflect South Korea's vibrant democracy and an economy that is the world's 13th largest, Roh said recent anti-US demonstrations were "voices aspiring for a more mature relationship."

"The demonstrations were staged on the premise that the US troops would continue to stay in Korea," he said of the outpouring of anger over the accidental deaths of two schoolgirls crushed by a US Army vehicle in June and the acquittal of the US drivers.

He said even after peace on the Korean peninsula: "US forces in South Korea will still play an important role in achieving a balance of power in the Northeast Asian region." *Reuters*

El Niño may be nearing end, scientists say

GENEVA—El Niño, which has brought drought and storms to many parts of the world since last May, has more bad weather in store for tropical Pacific areas before starting to fade around midyear, scientists said on Friday.

Their research, collected by the UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO), confirmed that the phenomenon, a large-scale oceanic warming, has wreaked less havoc than during its last incarnation in 1997-98, when it caused $34 billion of damage.

Described as a "moderate event," the current El Niño has coincided with climate anomalies including droughts in Australia and southern Africa and higher temperatures across Asia.

Now approaching its "mature stages," it has warmed sea surface temperatures across much of the central equatorial Pacific by 1.5 to two degrees Celsius above normal, a trend seen continuing for several months, according to a WMO statement.

The WMO said it was set to continue in the early months of 2003. "It is then likely that during March-June, there will be a slow decay of this warmth, corresponding to a gradual decay of El Niño," it said.

While historically it would be unusual for El Niño to continue throughout 2003, it was still too early for reliable predictions, it added.

"Although weaker than the 1997-98 event, which featured sea-surface temperatures three to four degrees Celsius above normal, this is a moderate El Niño event and its impacts are already apparent," WMO said.

Recent weather consistent with a continuing El Niño event included dry conditions over Indonesia and large tracts of Australia and rainy weather in the southeastern United States, southern Brazil, Uruguay and northern Argentina.

No two El Niño events, taken from the Spanish for "little boy," are identical, according to scientists. *Reuters*

At least 20 killed in mudslides in Brazil

RESCUE workers save Felipe dos Santos, a 10-year-old victim of mudslides in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, Jan. 16. REUTERS

BELO HORIZONTE, Brazil—Mudslides killed at least 20 people in Brazil on Thursday after strong rains swept through the central state of Minas Gerais, washing over hillside shantytowns and through the centers of cities.

The Fire Squad said at least 70 people had been hurt by the slides and it expected the death toll to rise as it continued to search for missing people.

State authorities estimated that 6,700 people were forced to evacuate their homes, while 2,280 residences were destroyed in the storms. Another 40 houses were in danger of collapsing.

The rains affected the whole state, including Belo Horizonte, Brazil's fourth-largest metropolitan area with more than 2 million people. Most of the southern part of the city was without water services because of the storms.

In the district of Morro das Pedras, eight children from the same family were buried in mud when the shack they were sleeping in collapsed. Only their parents, Antonio Laurencio and Valda Caldeira Santos, managed to escape initially.

By nightfall, firefighters had rescued just one of the children, a 10-year-old boy who spent 15 hours buried under the mud.

Mudslides washed over two highways and two buildings in the small city of Caratinga collapsed under the heavy rains.

Brazil's Vice President Jose Alencar, the acting president until Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva returns from a trip to Ecuador, was scheduled to visit the state to asses the damage. *Reuters*

Several shark species near extinction from overfishing

WASHINGTON—Overfishing has driven several species of shark to near extinction in the North Atlantic, researchers in Canada reported on Thursday.

Populations overall are down by 50 percent over the past 15 years, with hammerhead shark populations down 89 percent, Julia Baum and colleagues at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, report.

"Scalloped hammerhead, white and thresher sharks are estimated to have declined by over 75 percent in the past 15 years," they wrote in their report, published in the journal Science.

They analyzed logs kept by fishing boats seeking tuna and swordfish—also heavily hit by fishing—in the northwest Atlantic between 1986 and 2000. The fishing crews kept a record of every sea creature hooked on their longlines, which have 550 hooks on each line.

"We estimate that all recorded shark species, with the exception of *makos*, have declined by more than 50 percent in the past 8 to 15 years," they wrote.

Some areas have no white sharks at all, they reported.

"Our results show that overfishing is threatening large coastal and oceanic sharks in the North Atlantic," the researchers said. Marine reserves are not the answer, they added, because sharks range beyond the borders of such reserves.

In fact, a reserve can do harm if it concentrates fishing in smaller areas, they said. They recommended that protections for other large marine predators, such as sea turtles and tuna, be extended to sharks.

Why save sharks? They are extremely important to the marine ecosystem, scientists point out.

And despite media hype, they are not much of a threat to people.

George Burgess, director of the International Shark Attack File at the University of Florida, said 76 people were injured in unprovoked shark attacks around the world in 2001, and five were killed.

In contrast, as many as 100 million sharks are caught and killed around the world each year. They are hunted for their fins or killed accidentally by fishing boats.

Even Peter Benchley, the writer who brought sharks to worldwide prominence with his 1974 novel "Jaws," now campaigns on behalf of saving sharks. *Reuters*

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Marcos family not keen on busted bust's repair

LAOAG CITY—Other than its interesting sight, the defaced concrete bust of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos in Tuba, Benguet, may as well remain the way it is because even the strongman's family is not lifting a finger to have the monument refurbished.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the Marcoses don't feel the need to have the bust fixed despite the offer made recently by former Baguio City Mayor Ramon Labor Jr. to restore the busted monument.

"It's not really of great concern to us. The history of that bust is that it is really outside of the family. (When my father was alive) when he first went up, he didn't like it at all. He was even annoyed," Marcos told reporters here on Wednesday.

His mother, former First Lady Imelda Marcos, had treated Labo's offer as a kind gesture. The Marcos widow, however, said that any move to rehabilitate her husband's monument should be a collective decision among the Marcoses and their supporters.

Governor Marcos admitted that the bust was used as a symbol of personal aggrandizement, but which, he said, did not characterize his father.

"He didn't like those things. And they did it without asking him. So we never really felt very connected to that bust," he said.

He said having the bust repaired was never a subject of discussion among the family members.

Asked whether he believed reports pointing to the New People's Army as behind the bombing, Marcos said: "No. What I know is it was the work of treasure hunters. They probably thought gold was buried inside that monument."

"If you are a rebel and use that number of explosives, it would be just a wasteful thing to do. It would have mattered if my father was still alive," Marcos said in Filipino.

"I never believed it was the NPA. I always believed it was the treasure hunters because rumors had been going around about gold being buried in that bust."

Lito Gorospe, the governor's spokesperson, earlier said the Marcos bust, built during the time of then Tourism Minister Jose Aspiras, had long been suspected to contain part of the so-called Yamashita treasure that disappeared in the early 1970s.

He said even the house of Mrs. Marcos was not spared from being vandalized by treasure hunters, who suspected that the walls of the house were lined with gold. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Pacificador to appeal bail rejection even if case would drag on

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—Former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador said he would appeal a recent court order denying him bail for the murder of former Antique Gov. Evelio Javier even if it meant spending more time in jail without conviction.

"While I was hoping to be granted bail, I was prepared in case the court would deny it," Pacificador told the INQUIRER in an interview at the Antique provincial jail.

Pacificador, 72, said while he was disappointed with the ruling, he could not blame the judge because he was able to preside over the testimony of the 29 witnesses presented by the prosecution.

In a 19-page ruling, Judge Rudy Castrojas of the Antique Regional Trial Court Branch 12 denied the petition for bail of Pacificador and 16 of his co-accused.

Castrojas is the fifth judge to handle the case since trial started in 1987.

Castrojas said there was enough evidence to establish the participation of the accused in Javier's killing.

Although the prosecution failed to show that Pacificador fired any gun to kill Javier, he said there was proof that Pacificador provided food, money and house for the armed group that killed Javier led by Eduardo "Boy Muslim" Iran.

The judge, however, granted bail of P300,000 for accused Jose Seguerra because the prosecution had weak evidence to show his participation in the crime.

Pacificador, who has been detained since 1995, said he planned to consult with the other lawyers of the defense, including co-accused Avelino Javellana, on their possible action.

He said he was ready to bring the case to the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

"What is a few years compared to the time we have spent here in jail?" he said.

Francis Gideon Javier, son of the slain former governor, said the denial of bail was the "right thing to do."

"This is a very encouraging step. I hope they go all the way and finally get convicted and taken to Bilibid," he said in a telephone interview.

Juan Luna's painting draws thousands in Cebu

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Thousands of Cebuanos flocked to the SM City's Art Center to catch a glimpse of the world renowned Parisian Life of Juan Luna, which has been on exhibit since Jan. 13.

The visitors, many of them students, dropped by the Art Center to view the 110-year-old painting, said Cecille Gacendo, chief membership division of the Government Service Insurance System.

She said the painting, which was brought to Cebu last Monday, would be put on display for a week here. It will be brought back to Manila on Jan. 21.

The painting shows a woman seated in a coffee shop in 19th century Paris. Dr. Jose Rizal, Ariston Bautista and Luna were also in it seated around a table behind the woman.

The painting was auctioned off in Hong Kong and bought by the GSIS for P47 million in October.

Mayenne Fortuna, an SM employee, said almost 5,000 people had viewed the painting since Jan. 14. Most, she added, were students although many professionals were also seen viewing the painting.

BIG traders continue to try to skirt the law on agriculture imports, forcing Malacañang to send in the troops, led by Presidential Security Guard chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon (at right), to inspect incoming import cargo at the port area.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Korean car dealer found dead in N. Vizcaya ravine

By Melvin Gascon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ARITAO, Nueva Vizcaya—The decomposing body of a Korean businessman was found Wednesday in a ravine in Barangay Kirang here.

Based on documents recovered from the body, the victim was identified as Jeung Ga Chun, 52, owner of Seoul Motors Corp., and a resident of Barangay Dicarma in Cabanatuan City, according to Senior Insp. Johnny Baguidudol, Aritao police chief.

Jeung's body was found dangling from the treetops of thick wild bushes below a deep cliff in an isolated portion of the Nueva Vizcaya-Benguet Road.

He was believed abducted and killed elsewhere and his body dumped here.

Policemen found the body after a village official reported having seen a red Kia Besta van (license plate XEU 826) buried in thick bushes in the ravine.

Investigation led police to a case of one Charlie Chun, who was reported missing in Santiago City on Jan. 12. Other identification matched that of the found body here. According to the victim's former client, Jeung, whose company sells second-hand Korean cars, used to transact business in Northern Luzon.

Baguidudol said they had ruled out vehicular accident as the cause of Jeung's death. The victim's body bore three bullet wounds in the chest and lower back.

Farmers urge review of NFA import rules

SEVERAL farmers' groups yesterday appealed to the National Food Authority and Malacañang to review and modify the government guidelines that allow farmers' groups to import rice, saying these could be used by unscrupulous traders to the detriment of small farmers' cooperatives.

In a statement, Datu Michael Abas-Kida, a leader of the National Confederation of Irrigators' Association-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said although his group welcomes the importation of rice by farmers' groups, "major rice traders will most likely end up getting the bulk of the import allocations because of the 10,000 metric ton ceiling set by the guidelines."

He said the guidelines require farmers' groups to obtain letters of credit (LCs) from the Land Bank of the Philippines, a prerequisite that "will just disadvantage small farmers."

"We can have direct transactions with foreign suppliers said Abas-Kida.

The Philippines was projected to require the importation of 800,000 metric tons of rice for this year. In December, the NFA issued the guidelines for the importation.

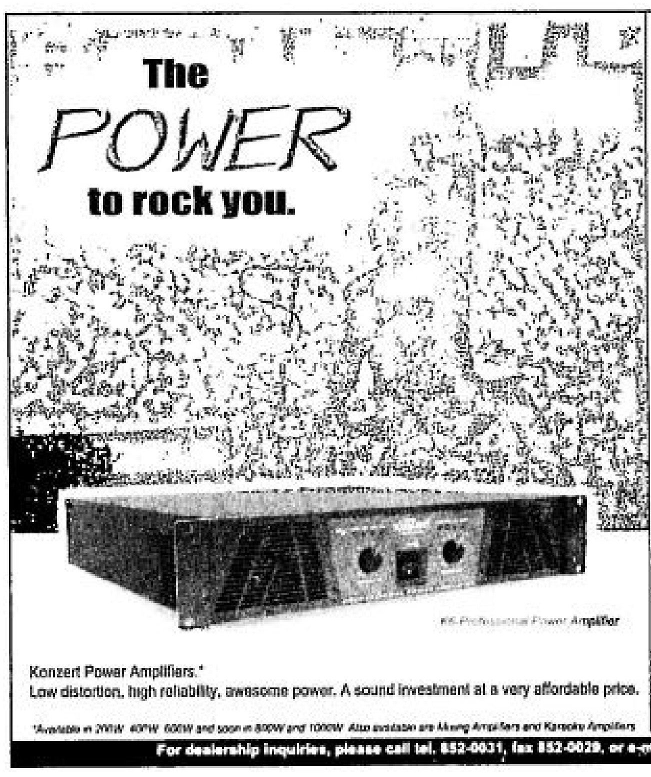
Under the guidelines, LCs are required for the issuance of import permits and the LBP would stop issuing LCs once the allocated import quota has been reached.

Abas-Kida said small farmers' cooperatives have no financial capability to open LCs.

Under the first-come, first-serve basis for getting LCs, "unscrupulous rice traders who are capable of acquiring the whole importation volume can easily register a number of farmers' cooperatives and consume the entire import allocation for a quarter," he said.

Farmers' cooperatives are allowed to import up to 10,000 metric tons of rice or 200,000 bags worth at least P170 million.

"Clearly, no cooperative can acquire this maximum volume. This volume ceiling will only give rice traders a chance to consume the allocation in no time," he said.



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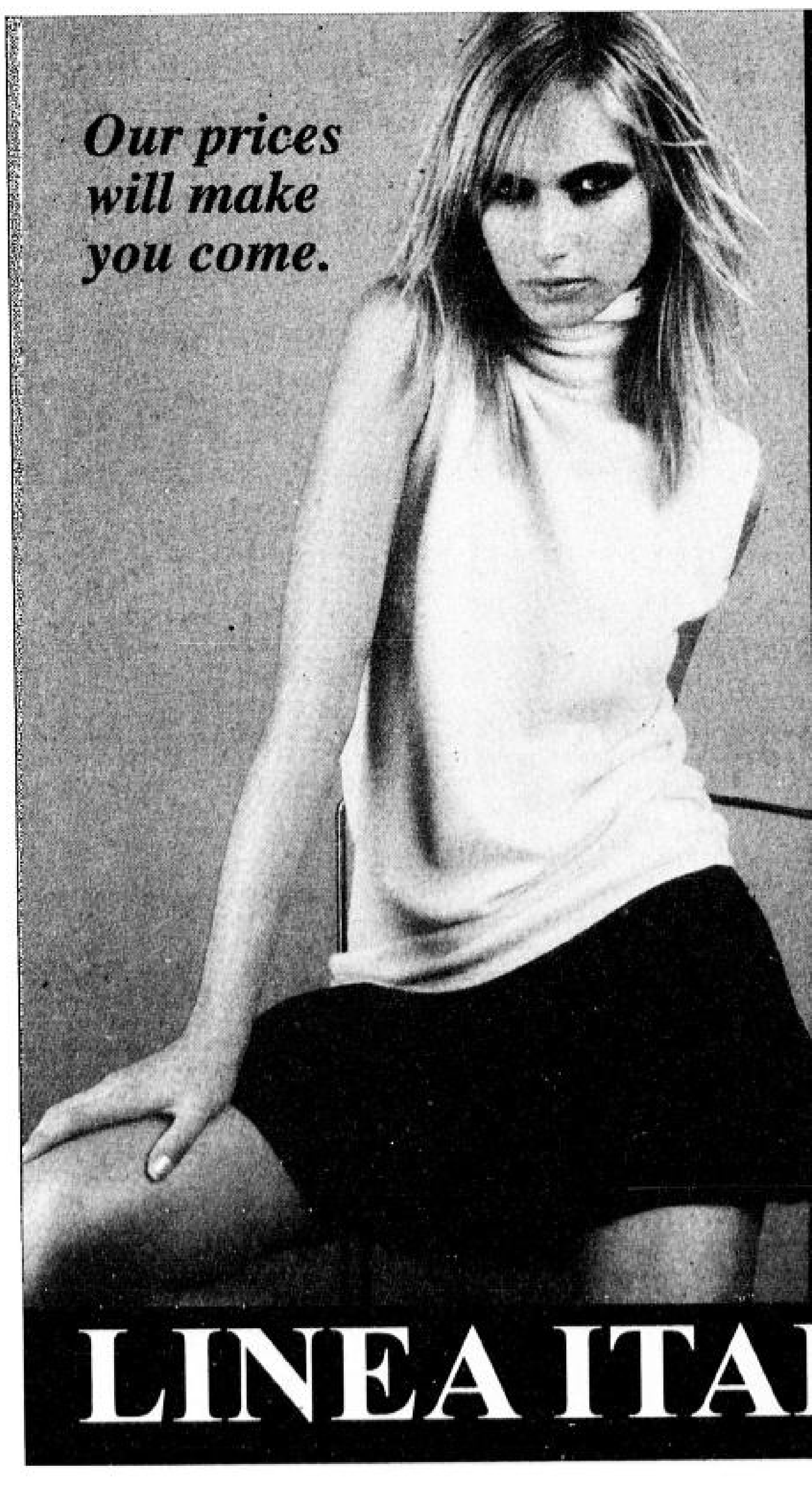

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RP life span longest in Cebu—UN

By Juan L. Mercado
Cebu City

FOR THE Visayan provinces, there are pluses, mixed with minuses, in the new study of the United Nations Development Program, the Philippine Human Development Report (PHDR).

The pluses: Life spans in all provinces, without exception, have risen. In fact, the longest-living Filipinos now are Cebuanos.

Now, the minuses: the neediest here swap premature graves for life-long sentences to penury. In the Visayas, "the rich exact what they want and the poor grant what they must."

At 71.8 years, Cebuano life expectancy is similar to Hungarians, the PHDR points out. Today, it's the country's highest.

In Negros Occidental, life spans are 69 years. It is 63 in Northern Samar and 62 in Antique. Both gained almost a year.

But "provincial disparities continue to be large," the study observes. Eastern Samar lags at 61.1 years.

Still, Visayan life spans exceed, sometimes by almost a generation, Sulu's truncated 52.3 years. People in Basilan face early burials, even without Abu Sayyaf help. Populating cemeteries rankle.

Stretched life spans for Aklanons (62.9 years) match those for North Koreans [Sou Koreans live a decade long .]. A Capizeño's 64.5 years is on par with a Khazak.

Still, Visayan life spans fall short of what is achievable: a Singaporean's 78 or a Japanese's 81 years. But there have been dramatic strides, too. Leyte gained 1.5 years—and joined the top 10 gainers.

"Life is the threshold at which all other hopes begin," the late National Scientist Dioscoro Umali told the Asia Society in New York. "No nation will accept sentences to premature graves for its citizens."

> In the Visayas, "the rich exact what they want and the poor grant what they must."

Old 'tape measures'

The PHDR uses research undertaken by the late Fr. Wilhelm Fleiger, SVD, and J. Cabigon from San Carlos University's Office of Population Studies. Over three decades, they marshaled census data into "Gradients of Mortality."

The PHDR goes beyond old "tape measures" like enrolment totals. It gauges human development and poverty, and factors in other data on nutrition, safe water, number of high school graduates, etc. These refined indicators reflect the gridlock arising from the Asian financial crash, El Niño and the Estrada administration's collapse. Human development decreased in 34 provinces, including the Visayas, the PHRD recalls.

Thus, no Visayan province made it to the top 10 in overall human development ranking. Rizal is "Numero Ono," followed by Cavite.

Out of 77 provinces nationwide, the HDI ranking for the Visayas was: Iloilo, 12; Cebu, 15; Bohol, 25; Guimaras, 27; Leyte, 30; Negros Occidental, 32; Siquijor, 38; Southern Leyte, 39; Aklan, 45; Capiz, 53; Antique, 55; Romblon, 56; Biliran, 59; Eastern Samar, 63; Negros Oriental, 66; Northern Samar, 67; and Western Samar, 70.

The PHDR also compares gauges of development with other nations. Where does the Visayas provinces stand in the international line-up? They're bunched up between Iran and Morocco—middle-level development nations, albeit on the lower end.

[Globally, the Philippines ranked 70th among 162 countries. "A steady improvement in the country's HDI places it among the upper half of countries with middle human development," the UNDP reports].

But will Lanao del Sur-like early graves be replaced ironically by lengthened lives, handcuffed to penury? They will, if schools fail.

The PHDR's refined indicators now integrate high-school graduate ratios. They reveal that nationwide, the proportion of high school graduates among adults is 49 out of every 100—up from 46 in 1997.

In Iloilo, 51 of 100 adults are high school graduates, and in Cebu, 42. Leyte's high school graduates jumped from 30 in 1997 to 36 in year 2000. It was 38 in Siquijor and 36 in Guimaras.

Tail-enders

All these leave in the dust Nur Misuari's Sulu (18). But that's far behind 67 in Rizal—and 74 in Metro Manila.

Visayan provinces were also among the "tail-enders" or those that had less than a third of adults getting a high school diploma. These included Negros Oriental and Bohol (33), and Biliran (32). "It is striking that all the Samar provinces are in the bottom 10," the UN study adds.

The PHDR measures "poverty incidence," too. And it gauges "depth." Just how far above the poverty line do people manage to scramble? How did the Visayas measure up?

Nationwide, there were 3.3 million more Filipinos in the poorhouse in 2000 than in 1997. "Erap Para Sa Mahirap" was then the glib mantra. The ranks of the poor bloated in Metro Manila and in 42 provinces.

"Fortunes differed across provinces," the UN report found. Annual per-head incomes varied from P30,830 in Iloilo to P21,410 in Guimaras, just across the narrow channel.

But five Visayan provinces were among the top 10 that wrested increases, in real per-head income: Siquijor and Iloilo (+19); Leyte (+16.8) Southern Leyte (+10.6) Eastern Samar (+9.3) and Northern Samar (+9.2).

Eastern Samar and Western Samar and Romblon found themselves among provinves where real income per-head of less than P10,000, the PHDR notes. Three out of every four in Romblon are poor, it says.

Poverty also festers. Out of every 100 Capiz residents, 47 lack access to improved water supplies.

Polluted water threatens 34 in Iloilo and 25 in Cebu. Compare that to Mountain Province's 3.

In Negros Occidental, chronic hunger leaves over 14 out of every 100 kids, below five, underweight, the Fifth National Nutrition Survey found. Southern Leyte is worse with almost 17. In contrast, Camiguin has a manageable 4.

Abstract statistics can mask the human beings they represent. Yet, "the poor are not another race of creatures bound on other journeys," Charles Dickens wrote in 1843. "They are fellow-passengers to the grave."

Stark income disparity

The PHDR's tables sketch a face of hunger in skewed consumption. With small variations, the poorest 10 percent of Visayans account for between three centavos to four centavos from every peso spent.

But the richest 10 percent—the overfed, overweight and sometimes overdressed elite who prance on society pages—splurged anywhere between 27 and 35 centavos.

In Negros Oriental, the poorest settle for over two centavos, while the affluent spend 35 centavos. That is a recipe for rebellion.

An upheaval stoked by hunger, as the Labor Day riots outside Malacañang demonstrated, is no tea party. These are "people of the short straw—men and women, of the broken plow, for whom it is almost too late."

A GOOD life for Maxino who had just turned 100.

A beautiful life for 100-yr-old matriarch

By Romy G. Amarado
Dumaguete City

SHE just turned 100 years old, yet her age has not impaired her mental prowess or bridled her daily routine of prayers. And she still regularly puffs her favorite cigar, made from rolled dry leaves of the *lomboy* (*duhat*) tree.

Raymunda Chua Maxino, matriarch of the illustrious Maxino siblings who carved a niche of academic excellence for all graduating with top honors in high school and college, turned centenarian on Jan. 10.

Lola Munda, as relatives and friends fondly call her, can readily enumerate the names and birth dates of her nine children, as well as those of her 29 grandchildren.

The sharpness of her memory, which shows the level of her intellect, can also be appreciated by the way she turns storyteller and narrates some of her unforgettable experiences.

For example, she can still recall details of how a solid stone that resembled the icon of her patron saint, Señor San Roque, was discovered shortly before World War II in 1939 by a relative in a canal near their old house in the village of Tampucon in Ayungon town, 82 km north of Dumaguete City. She said the icon was entrusted to her and was instrumental in treating sick people during her younger days.

She can still remember that day in August 1924, while she and her husband Hermenegildo were aboard a ship from Malitbog, Leyte to Cebu, a strong wind battered the vessel.

Her account of the way her children were brought up is quite inspiring as she expounds, with certainty and authority, the principles and virtues she and her late husband had inculcated in the minds of their offspring.

Secret: Prayerful life

When asked about the secret of her longevity, Lola Munda says she believes it is God's will for her to lead a life full of prayers. "Every time I wake up, the first thing I do is to pray. I pray in the morning, afternoon and evening, five to six times," she beams.

Her deep religiosity and devotion to Señor San Roque inspired her and her family to put up a church in Tampucon.

She still has her sense of humor. For instance, when asked about her diet, she says in jest that she eats anything and relishes *kinilaw* (raw fish marinated in vinegar and spices), especially the one made of fish fry even though, she admits, the dish is high in uric acid and not good for aging people.

When reminded of the hazards of smoking, she just smiles and says she has been puffing lomboy since she was 12 years old.

The way Lola Munda tells her experiences reveals her positive attitude toward life. In almost two hours of chatting with their writer, she never mentioned any instance of bitterness or regret despite the many hardships she had gone through.

Her love and affection for her children and their families continues to be her priority.

"I always pray to God for the well-being of my children,'" she says in Cebuano.

Achievers all

Lola Munda, who was only able to reach Grade 2, has eight surviving children—Luciano, 78; Lorenzo, 75; Mecirata, 72; Vicente, 68; Marcelino, 64; Gerado, 61; Hospicia, 57; and Hope, 52. All of them graduated valedictorian or salutatorian in high school and cum laude or magna cum laude in college.

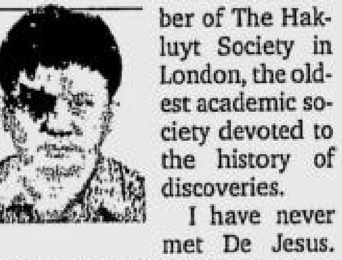
Luciano, Vicente and Marcelino are lawyers, while Lorenzo, a former mayor of Dumaguete, is a certified public accountant. Mecirata is a commerce graduate and retired government employee. Gerardo and Hope are physics professors of Silliman University, while Hospicia is a teacher and education consultant.

Lola Munda's eldest, Dominador, graduated valedictorian in high school, but died in the infamous Death March in 1942 during World War II. The grand patriach, Hermenegildo, died of heart failure in 1970.

To Lola Munda, life is beautiful. That is why when asked what her wish is on her centennial birthday, she said, "I am praying to God to give me and my children good health and more years."

Continuing controversy

VINTAGE VIEW
Rolando O. Borrinaga



I DEBUT my column in the INQUIRER Visayas with an item about a continuing controversy involving the history of Eastern Visayas—the location of the historical Mazaua, the site of the first Mass in the Philippines. One group claims that Mazaua was Masao, Butuan in Mindanao, while another says it was Limasawa, Southern Leyte.

In 1997, an ad hoc panel, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Emilio A. Gancayco, was commissioned by the National Historical Institute (NHI) to settle the controversy once and for all. On March 20, 1988. the panel issued its verdict: "[Based] upon a preponderance of evidence culled from the primary sources, the first-ever Christian Mass on Philippine soil on March 31, 1521 was celebrated on the island of Limasawa south of Leyte."

The ruling was disputed by the pro-Butuan group, which include among its vocal critics Vicente C. de Jesus, a speech writer of several top-ranking government officials during the Marcos era. De Jesus is a member of The Hakluyt Society in London, the oldest academic society devoted to the history of discoveries.

I have never met De Jesus. Our first contact was through e-mail in November last year, when he commented on my article, "Lapulapu in Biliran: A tentative hypothesis," that was posted on my website. Then he brought up the issue of Mazaua and Gines de Mafra, a member of the Magellan expedition, who returned to the islands as a member of the Villalobos expedition and was marooned in Mazaua for about two months in 1543.

De Jesus claimed that the Gancayco panel had ignored De Mafra's account and he used this lapse to dispute the widely accepted verdict that appeared in various papers and leaflets, which he sent to me by e-mail.

Now, I believe the Mazaua-Limasawa theory. I also believe that De Mafra's account is crucial to Mazaua's identification as Limasawa. I have not read the Gancayco Report in full, so I was surprised to learn that the panel had ignored this account.

Perhaps it is because of this lapse that Limasawa's first Mass commemoration is still celebrated in Barangay Magallanes on the southeastern coast of the island, where a modern cross and a marker were erected on the top of a hill.

I have always believed that the first Mass was celebrated in Barangay Triana in the vicinity of Limasawa's poblacion, which faces a cove on the west-central part of the island. I infer from an aerial photograph in my possession that the 1521 cross was erected atop a prominent hill to the right of the poblacion when facing the sea.

I read Pigafetta's chronicles of the Magellan expedition again and realized that, indeed, he never mentioned ships sailing around the island to the west and docking at the harbor there. The relevant paragraph started: "On Thursday morning, March twenty-eight, as we had seen a fire on an island the night before, we anchored near it . . . " It ended with: "In the afternoon, we went in the ships [and anchored] near the dwellings of the king."

This paragraph suggests that the boats pulled the anchors they had dropped in the morning and anchored the ships again elsewhere—in a place and direction not stated by Pigafetta.

The relevance of these two anchorages found clarification in the 1565 Legazpi chronicles. The relevant passages about Mazaua went as follows: "Because the [1543] report of Bernardo de la Torre says that the village was located on the eastside of the island and the landing place for ships at the westside, the ships with on board the Prior and Maese de Campo proceeded to that part of the island where the village was said to be.

"However, they did not find a single house, no Indio, nay nothing at all, after which they continued northward along the coast till reaching the landing place at the westside. Here they saw only one Indio who shouted at them from a rock-cropping; they shouted back at him.

"But when the Indio heard that they were Spaniards, he came down from his rock via a ladder of ropes and rattan; because they thought that he would be coming to the shore to meet the men, they waited a long time for him. But all that the Indio did was that after coming down from the rock he went up a low hill where a small hut was standing; he put fire to it and after that went furiously back to his rock, climbing up via the same ladder, and once on the top he cut it and let it drop, all the while shouting at the sailors. The latter went back aboard and reported these matters."

The western anchorage mentioned in the Legazpi chronicles might have been the same place mentioned by De Mafra in his account.

De Jesus' paper, "Mazaua: Magellan's Lost Harbor" cited that the explorer had a direct hand in naming the isle "Massawa," also the name of one port of entry in the Red Sea. The word has a local meaning and context. "Masawa" in Butuanon means "bright" or "light."

The root word might also have been "sawah," a native word referring to wet-rice agriculture. The natives were about to harvest rice during Magellan's stay on the island.

The barangay poblacion of Limasawa has always been named "Triana." Local folklore said this was a pun of Tirana, one of the fives wives of Bankaw (or Mancao) whose name has been immortalized by a Visayan *balitao* (folk song).

However, the name "Triana" might have been given by Magellan himself. Triana in Spain is a suburb of Seville, separated from the main city by the Guadalquivir River and connected to it by a series of bridges. In the main church of Triana, Magellan married Beatriz Barbosa.

The place-name "Triana" is my principal clincher for the Mazaua-Limasawa argument.

THE AUTHOR, based in Tacloban City, is an associate professor of the School of Health Sciences of the University of the Philippines-Palo, Leyte campus. He is also a health researcher, local historian and community journalist.

Guingona: War to devastate RP economy

From page A1

"The report of the United Nations on the possible consequences of the Iraq war points to half a million casualties—all Iraqi civilians," he said, adding:

"The deployment by the US to the Gulf of the biggest hospital ship ever built, with a 1,000-bed capacity, underscores the number of anticipated casualties on the side of the invading forces as well."

Baghdad's envoy to the Philippines has dared the United States to invade his country and said Iraqis were ready with enough water and stockpiled food to last five months.

"Let them come, we will show them," the Associated Press quoted Iraqi Charge d'Affaires Samir A-Masih Bulos as telling reporters Thursday night at a cocktail party. "I will tell you frankly, they will hurt us ... but they will not defeat us. There is a big difference."

The party, held at the Iraqi Embassy to mark the 12th anniversary of the start of the Gulf War, turned into a news briefing on a possible US-led attack on Iraq.

Bulos' comments were similar to the speech Iraqi President Saddam Hussein delivered on Friday.

Reason to protest

Guingona, who joined the activists in calling for a national day of prayer for peace in the Middle East, said there was "reason to protest" the presence here of 3,000 US troops ostensibly for the purpose of training the Philippine military.

He acknowledged the prevailing sentiment that the US military presence "presages the country's involvement and the use of Philippine territory, through the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement, in the US war against Iraq."

He said that if the war pushed through, "especially if it's unilateral, in disregard of the United Nations, it shall have destroyed the hopes and aspirations of many for what the UN stands for."

Guingona called on Filipinos to participate in prayers to avert the impending US attack.

"I oppose the war against Iraq, but I know nothing I say alone will change the situation. Neither will international debate alone," he said, noting that British Prime Minister Tony Blair had announced that the attack would push through despite a UN veto.

"Only God's intervening hand can hold back the pit bulls of war and prevent the hounds of terrorism from being unleashed," he added.

Guingona resigned last year as foreign secretary over "major differences" with President Macapagal-Arroyo on the military training exercises with US troops and on Manila's role in the US-led war against international terrorism.

Pretext for war

Iraq's Bulos accused Washington of looking for a "pretext for war" so it could take over the oil supply of his country, the second largest producer of oil next to Saudi Arabia.

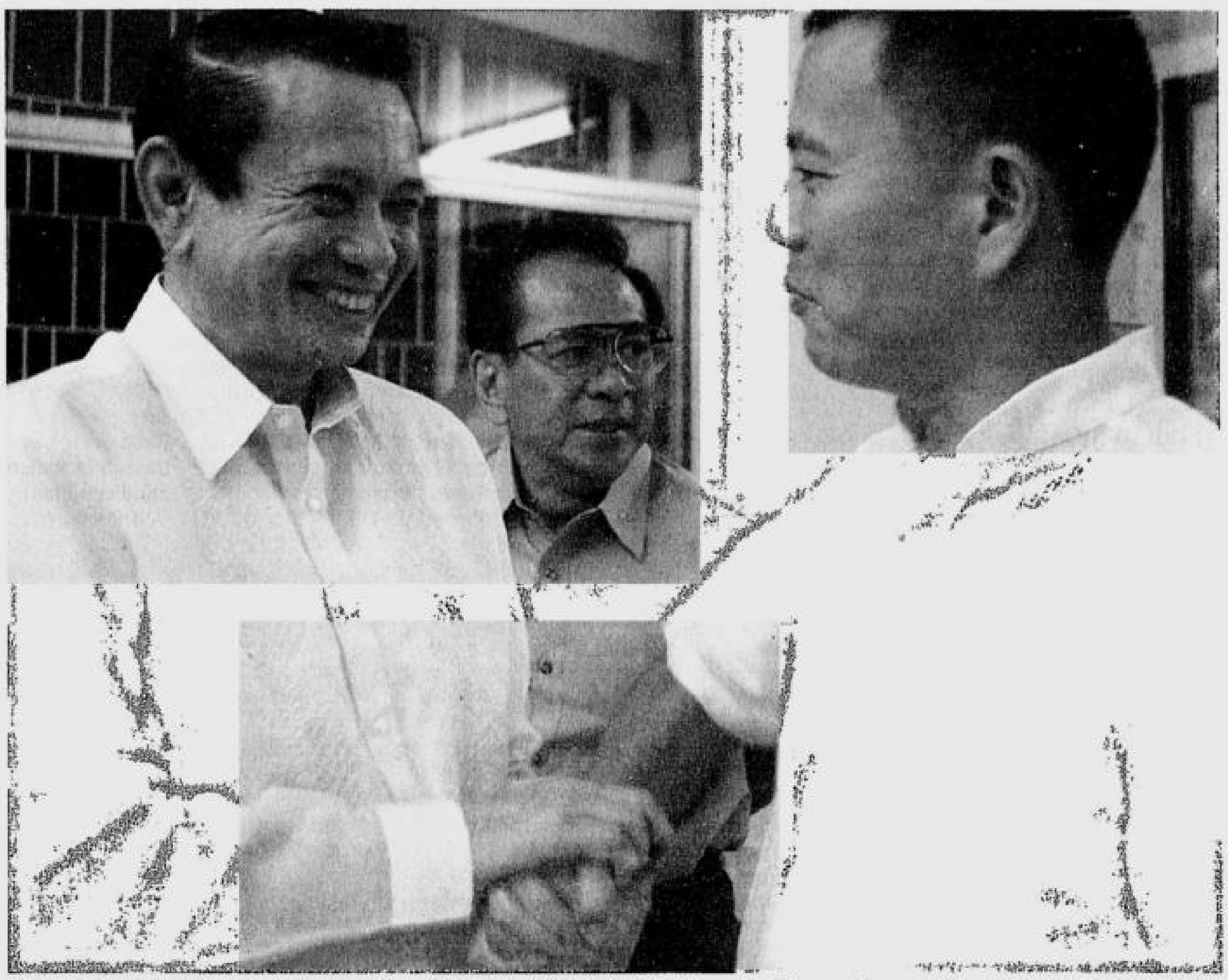
He said the Iraqi government had cooperated with UN arms inspectors, and that they would find no proof that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

It was subsequently reported that UN inspectors found 11 empty chemical warheads at an Iraqi munitions dump Thursday. But the Iraqis claimed they were not linked to any prohibited weapons, and a UN source described the find as insignificant.

Bulos criticized Arab leaders who had reportedly suggested that Hussein step down to avoid war. "Nonsense," he said. "The Arabs who ask this, they are more than cowards."

He said Iraqis would fight "to the last man and woman" in "defending our president, our sovereignty, our dignity."

"We have prepared ourselves for the worst," he said.



REUNION of Edsa II's key players is held on Thursday night at the UP Chapel in Diliman, Quezon City. Guingona reminisces with Fr. Robert Reyes and "whistle-blower" Chavit Singson. JOAN BONDOC

Bolus stressed that engaging Iraq in war by claiming it as part of the US global campaign against terrorism was not justified.

"There are no links between Iraq and terrorism," he said. "We have not done such acts."

He also said the economic sanctions that were "hurting the population of Iraq" should be lifted, and pointed out that his country had normalized relations with its neighbors after the 1991 Gulf War.

Bolus warned Arab countries against helping the United States mass its forces in the Gulf, saying this could be a prelude to losing their sovereignty.

"They are our brothers, [and] brothers do not kill each other," he said. But he declined to answer whether Iraq would retaliate against countries allied with the United States in case of a war. *With reports from AP, AFP*

Gloria now for Charter change

From page A1

she said.

Asked if the announcement should be regarded as her marching order to her party mates and allies in Congress, Bunye said: "The next move will depend on the other departments of government."

Bunye did not elaborate on the shift of the President's stand on Charter change.

"The President gave the statement during an interview with Japanese media on the eve of the second anniversary of Edsa II," Bunye said in the prepared statement he read for the President.

Malacañang had repeatedly said before that the President was neutral on the issue and will not stop Congress from discussing such a measure.

Malacañang released excerpts of the interview to the public, and Bunye briefed reporters.

"President (Macapagal) Arroyo said she favors an elected constitutional convention that will be elected with other officials in the 2004 national elections to consider amendments to the Constitution instead of other modes being pushed in Congress," Bunye said in a statement he read on behalf of the President.

"Considering the divisiveness in our country, perhaps the constitutional convention will be the least divisive way of bringing about fundamental changes in the political system through the Constitution," Ms Macapagal said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon immediately hailed her statement.

"The President has taken the high moral ground since her Dec. 30 announcement (that she will no longer run in the 2004 elections) and this, again, would indicate that she is serious in leaving a legacy that, indeed, the only purpose for the remainder of her term is to improve the lives of our people without any political agenda," Drilon said in a press briefing.

He said four other senators from both sides of the political fence have already signed a resolution calling for a constitutional convention whose delegates will be elected in the May 2004 elections. Drilon said the four were Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda, Senate Minority Leader Vicente Sotto III, administration Sen. Robert Jaworski and opposition Sen. John Osmeña.

"There are already five of us who already signed and I have talked to a number of our colleagues and I am confident that by Monday, we should have more than a majority of the senators supporting this resolution calling for a constitutional convention," Drilon said.

In the House, a Charter change advocate welcomed Malacañang's announcement. "That's an absolute plus factor for those who believe the Charter should be amended. If the President is agreeable to a Con-Con, so be it," said Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, chair of the House legislative franchises committee.

Zubiri said House members who want to amend the Charter through a constituent assembly should now reconsider their position.

"Let's have this as a middle ground. What is important is that we all agree that we should amend the Constitution," Zubiri said.

No more Edsas

In Baguio City, a constituent assembly advocate said a new Constitution would eliminate the need for any more Edsa political uprisings.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan, vice chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, said he will deliver the sponsorship speech next week for a proposed House measure that would convert both houses of Congress into a constituent assembly.

"The change of system would mean no more Edsa I and Edsa II because a proposed parliamentary government and unicameral legislation would facilitate immediate replacement of erring or unpopular national leaders," he said.

Monday marks the second anniversary of Edsa II, which unseated President Joseph Estrada and swept President Macapagal to power.

The proposed new Charter would also address contentious economic issues spawned, Domogan said, by some of the strongest civil rights provisions in the 1987 Constitution, Domogan said.

He said among the Charter provisions Congress wants to amend are the prohibitions on foreign property ownership and the provision recognizing the ancestral rights of indigenous Filipinos.

Foreign diplomats have said the Constitution contains many protectionist provisions that bar the entry of foreign capital that would help 32 million poor Filipinos, who make up 40 percent of a rapidly growing population.

In the Senate, Drilon took offense at statements made by some House leaders that they would boycott any elected senator who would oppose Charter change.

"The senators cannot be threatened by such political blackmail. We will stand on what we believe is right for our people and threats such as these have no place in our system of government," he said.

Drilon also said that senators are not out to block Charter change because any amendments to the Constitution could result in the abolition of the Senate.

"We have no qualms about (the possible abolition of the Senate). The people gave you the mandate; the people can also cut it short," he said.

Parliamentary?

In the interview with foreign journalists, Ms Macapagal was asked whether the system of government should be changed from presidential to parliamentary. She replied that it was "something that is better left to the constitutional convention."

"I don't want my intention to be suspect," said Ms Macapagal, who had stunned the nation with her Dec. 30 declaration.

"If it is a constitutional convention, then they will be elected in 2004 together with other officials," the President said.

Nothing sinister

A Palace insider said the President's announcement should now stop speculation that "something sinister was afoot in her declaration not to run anymore in 2004."

The source was referring to a supposed scenario that a shift to parliamentary government will be effected before the 2004 elections.

According to this scenario, President Macapagal will run for a parliamentary seat in her hometown of Lubao, Pampanga, and then be elected prime minister by her peers.

"That's too much imagination," the Malacañang official said.

In Baguio, Domogan said the President was aware that one option the House was considering was the election of a transitional President in 2004—somebody who would serve for only three years as head of a transition government.

But Domogan emphasized in a press briefing that Ms Macapagal's decision not to run in 2004 was not influenced by this timetable.

"The President was very much aware (about these options)," he said. But Ms Macapagal's chief concern was to distance herself from the advocacy for constitutional changes because of her Dec. 30 declaration, he added. *With reports from Vincent Cabreza and Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and AFP*

Party mates deaf to GMA call for end to politicking

From page A1

He said 25 Lakas congressmen and two from NPC were present, including Representatives Prospero Nograles, Antonio Floirendo, Benasing Macarambon and Ed Veloso.

Nograles said that with NPC's 63 members in the House, it would be "very easy to get 100" congressmen to endorse Cojuangco.

In Cebu City, Manny Portes, the interim national president of the Freedom, Peace and Justice (FPJ) Movement, told the INQUIRER his group of "ordinary citizens" was initiating a signature campaign to convince Poe to join the presidential race.

The national launch of the FPJ Movement, a name based on the popular actor's initials, aims to gather at least 6 million signatures by September, Portes said. Poe has not said he was interested in running, but Portes said if 6 million signatures are gathered he believed Poe would not be able to say No.

In Baguio City, Rep. Mauricio Domogan said Lakas advocates for Charter change had explained to the President why many party members cannot heed her "no politics" appeal.

"Much as we want to, and I am convinced that there should be no (talk about) politics, we cannot comply with her appeal which is a noble one. The present system makes (a non-political stance this close to election year) very difficult, if not impossible," Domogan said.

Loved and feared

Paras said "the clamor is for somebody who has competence, good track record, strong will and winnability," qualities which he said Cojuangco has.

Nograles said Cojuangco deserved to be the next President because "he is both loved and feared."

"It is not enough that you are loved, you must be feared to have a strong republic," Nograles said.

He said Cojuangco was feared because he was a "no-nonsense guy who says what he means."

Cojuangco's nephew, Tarlac Rep. Gilbert Teodoro of the NPC, has said that his uncle, who ran for President in 1992, was not interested in running again.

"Of course all these candidates are not interested now but if they see that there is a clamor for them, they will change their mind," Paras said.

He said the names of Senators Juan Flavier, Loren Legarda and Robert Barbers and former President Fidel Ramos were mentioned during their meeting.

He said most of the congressmen believed the three senators would make good vice presidential candidates, but they saw the constitutional restriction on reelection hindering Ramos' putative candidacy.

He said the group was "overwhelmingly for" Barbers as Cojuangco's running mate.

Paras, chair of the House committee on transportation and communication, said he would formally propose Cojuangco's candidacy during the meeting of the Lakas national directorate on Monday.

Paras said Cojuangco's candidacy has a good chance of being endorsed even by Lakas, saying he believed many other Lakas congressmen were rooting for him.

Lakas and the NPC are the two biggest members of the ruling coalition in the House.

Nograles said Lakas had to search for a new standard-bearer because, with Ms Macapagal's decision, it had become "like a headless chicken."

GMA statement

The President herself declined yesterday to name her party's candidate in the 2004 presidential elections despite pressure from politicians.

"At the appropriate time, I will communicate my thoughts on any of those who make their candidacy known," she said in a terse statement.

Lakas members have persistently asked her to name her chosen successor after she announced last month that she was not running in the 2004 elections.

"At this point, I am not thinking about politics but rather the hard business of rebuilding our economy and our society," she said.

"I believe we should now be focused on building the economy, promoting reforms and signing legislation that will improve the lives our people," she said in an apparent rejoinder to politicians who have been jockeying for position in the coming elections.

The FPJ Movement said their signature campaign would target *"sari-sari"* (neighborhood convenience) stores and public market stalls.

Portes said it would be up to the stall and store owners to convince their customers to sign the petition.

But he clarified that his group was composed of "ordinary citizens" who believed that Poe was the only candidate who could unite the country.

"In fairness to Poe, he does not know us... We are doing this on our own," said Portes, also president of the FPJ Movement in Southern Tagalog.

In fact, he added, they had chipped in their own money for today's launch. Ironically, the event will be held in Cebu where there is no local chapter of the FPJ Movement.

But Portes explained that they chose Cebu as a venue to symbolize unification, pointing out that the island is located at the center of the Philippine archipelago.

ABC for FPJ

The group intends to convince the A, B and upper C classes to go for Poe. If they will be able to achieve that, Portes said, "*tapos na ang boksing* (then the fight is over)."

Poe has not categorically stated that he would not seek the presidency. In previous interviews, he has said that it was too early to talk about politics.

But on Tuesday, his close friend Estrada told reporters that Poe was one of his preferred presidential candidates.

The two others were opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson and Cojuangco, who is chair of San Miguel Corp.

Portes said Poe was the only candidate capable of uniting the people, as had happened in 1986, he said, when the Filipinos rallied behind Corazon Aquino, the widow of assassinated opposition leader Benigno Aquino.

Portes also said Poe had the character and the sincerity to run the country.

He noted that Poe had never asked a single favor from Estrada whom he had helped become mayor, senator, vice president and then eventually president. *With reports from Vincent Cabreza and Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and AFP*

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SPORTS
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Barrichello seeks F1 championship

RIO DE JANEIRO—Ferrari's Brazilian driver Rubens Barrichello said in Thursday's Lance newspaper he would be challenging to realize his dream of winning the Formula One world championship this year. Ferrari dominated the 2002 season with 15 victoires in 17 Grands Prix, a fifth-world title for Germany's Michael Schumacher and the constructors' crown. *AFP*

Mizuno pro wins in Davao as Casas blunders on last hole

PUCAY

By Jong Arcano

DAVAO—Everybody but Mars Pucay saw hometown favorite Cassius Casas miss a short putt for bogey yesterday on the final hole, giving Pucay his first title in the First Gentleman's Golf Circuit.

As Casas stood over a four-foot putt with the championship of the Rancho Palos Verdes leg on the line, Pucay bowed his head and kept his eyes on his scorecard.

Pucay, who was tapped as a Mizuno pro only recently by Lovell Gopez, secured his victory with a two-putt par.

The Baguio-born Pucay was four behind with eight holes to go and everything seemed lost at that point.

But Casas threw it all away with three bogeys and a double bogey on the last eight holes.

The 32-year-old Pucay finally got one in the Tour revived by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo through his foundation, San Miguel Beer and WG&A Super Ferry after very close misses in the first three legs–one of them to Casas at Sherwood Hills.

Pucay was not to be frustrated this time as the newest Mizuno endorser closed out with a one-under-par 71 for a 7-under 281 that also gave him his first victory in almost four years since the Orchard leg of the now defunct Philip Morris Classic.

He won the P100,000 first prize of the P600,000 total pot staked in this seventh leg of the Tour that also kicked off the Mindanao swing.

The Tour goes next to Pueblo del Oro then to Del Monte before heading back to Manila.

Interestingly, Pucay's victory reaffirmed his streak of good luck in the durian-producing city, where he picked up his fourth win since turning pro in 1994.

"After three close misses, I finally got my turn. This victory will surely boost my confidence. My gratitude goes to Mesaland, Mizuno and my home course Sta. Elena," said Pucay, who became the sixth winner of the circuit.

But as if by coincidence, the brand-new Mizuno pro had actually beaten the former Mizuno pro in Casas, whose career seemed to have nose dived after sparking a lawsuit when he illegally bolted Mizuno some years back.

The illustrious Frankie Miñoza was finally able to break par, his two-under 70 giving him a share of 15th with Benjie Magada.

The scores:

281--M. Pucay 73-67-70-72 (35-36)

282--C. Casas 73-69-67-73 (34-39)

286--E. Salvador 69-69-74-74 (37-37)

288--E. Bagtas 72-71-73-72 (36-36)

290--R. Pactolerin 73-75-73-69 (35-34), D. Zarate 73-71-73-73 (34-39), R. Sinfuego 73-72-71-74 (35-39)

292--A. Lascuña 72-75-69-76 (39-37)

293--R. Pagunsan 72-71-77-73 (38-35), M. Siodina 72-70-75-76 (37-39)

Chua keeps crown but not after a chorus of bizarre shots

By Al S. Mendoza
Sports Editor

HEIDI Chua retained her Philippine Ladies Open crown yesterday but not after joining her challengers to a chorus of bizarre shotmaking at the Manila Golf Club.

Quite frankly, Chua did not really win it. She was merely the anointed on a day when everybody seemed more concerned with losing than winning.

Chua herself acknowledged the near-farce.

First, the 26-year-old Chua shot a 9-over-par 80 to forge a sudden-death with the 16-year-old Jayvie Agojo, who staggered home with an 81.

Next, Chua overcame a last-hole misadventure that saw her finish with a double bogey on a flubbed four-footer that could have given her the crown outright.

In the sudden-death, Chua two-putted for par on the par-5 18th, restoring sanity to a tupsy-turvy day that saw Agojo three-putt the hole to finish second.

"*Grabe, Tito* (terrible)," said Chua. "I really didn't expect to win. The greens were like crazy."

That was an understatement.

The 18th hole battle between Chua and Agojo did not really produce drama but trauma, traumatizing even the spectators.

Agojo looked a sure loser when she hit her second shot out-of-bounds on the par-5 18th.

But in a game noted for wondrous shots that come at the most unexpected occasions, Agojo pitched in for bogey.

Chua, just paces away from the green and needing just a bogey to wrap up the crown, hit her fourth shot fat.

She missed a four-footer for bogey to set up the sudden-death.

"I went for the lob instead of the bump-and-run with my fourth shot and I almost paid the price," said Chua, who will see action in the Kosaido Tour in Malaysia next week.

If she almost paid the price, the rest paid the price for their folly.

Lucy Landicho, who shared the lead with Agojo going to yesterday's last round, had an 82 to miss the playoff by one shot.

Balikbayan Ria Quiazon made 80=235 for fourth.

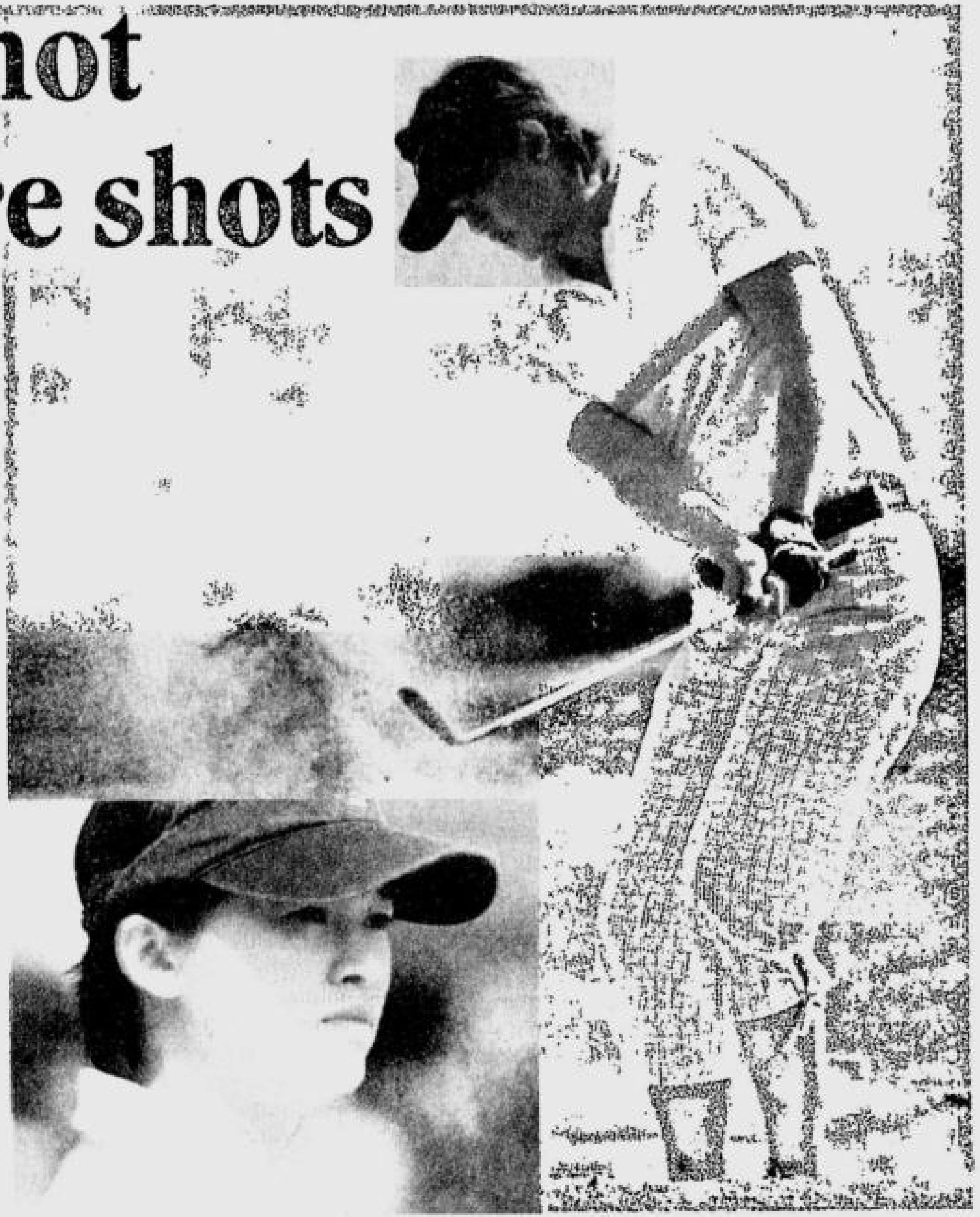
The rest submitted scores fit for the dustbin of RP Ladies Open history.

"I'm glad to have kept the title despite my preparations. I think I need to get back to work now because of my long schedule this year," said Chua.

She said her father had tried to stop her from playing.

"My Dad tried to stop me from defending my crown when I intimated to him I had a feeling I wasn't ready to play," said Chua. "This was really a bonus."

With a report from Jong Arcano


CHUA: "My victory was but a mere bonus."
ROGER MARGALLO

Awards telecast tonight

THE 2002 PSA Annual Awards Night will be telecast over NBN-4 today at 9 p.m.

The show, hosted by basketball star Alex Compton and sportscaster Patricia Bermudez, features 75 athletes and sports leaders, led by Sportswoman of the Year Mikee Cojuangco, who were honored by the Philippine Sportswriters Association during the Annual Awards Night held Jan. 10 at the Holiday Inn Manila.

The show is sponsored by Red Bull, Photokina and Agfa and supported by Samsung, San Miguel Corporation, the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Adidas.

The major awardees of 2002 were Willie Miller (pro basketball), Enrico Villanueva (amateur basketball), Django Bustamante/Antonio Lining, Efren Reyes (billiards), Paeng Nepomuceno /RJ Bautista, Liza del Rosario (bowling), Angelo Que, Dottie Ardina, Jayvie Agojo (amateur golf), Harry Tanamor (amateur boxing), Windblown (horse of the year).

PSA awarded the President's Award to the Ateneo Blue Eagles/Coach Joel Banal and the Special Award to PNP Chief Superintendent Cris Maralit, a former sportswriter.

Welcoat, Dazz target Challenge Cup finals

GAMES TODAY *(Pasig Sports Center)*
2 p.m.—Welcoat Paints vs LBC
4 p.m.—Dazz vs Blu Detergent

By Dennis U. Eroa

LEADER Welcoat Paints and Dazz seek finals berths today as they clash with LBC and Blu Detergent, respectively, in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

Both enjoying the twice-to-beat advantage, the Paintmasters and the Sparklers are favored to prevail over their respective foes and make the best-of-five championship series.

Welcoat, the eliminations leader, meets LBC at 2 p.m., while the 4 p.m. tiff pits Dazz against Blu Detergent.

Welcoat coach Leo Austria, who is seeking his third PBL title, said his team isn't in the mood to give LBC the benefit of a do-or-die match.

'We are determined to end it immediately. Nobody really expects us to lose," said Austria, the former Shark mentor.

Victories by both Welcoat and Dazz would mean the revival of the Austria-Junel Baculi rivalry.

Austria's twin triumphs came at the expense of Baculi, who was the former Welcoat coach.

While Welcoat had won four titles under Baculi, Dazz (formerly Hapee) is seeking to end years of frustration.

The Cecilio Pedro-franchise had paraded Ma Jian to win the Reinforced crown years back. Baculi coached the team and Austria was one of his players.

Romel Adducul remains a deadly inside presence, but much of the Paintmasters' triumph' can be credited to Eddie Laure and Ronald Tubid and Austria's coaching savvy.

LBC mentor Nash Racela admits that his charges cannot match the Paintmasters' talent.

"Welcoat is a very talented and strong team. It will be our system against its talent," said Racela after beating ICTSI-La Salle in the playoff for the fourth semis slot.

Austria said he's ready to face Racela's adjustments.

"'The team is practicing very well. We'll have answers to Racela's style," Austria said.

PBA-bound Marlon Legaspi and Arnold Calo will banner Blu's bid to force a playoff. The Detergent Kings had lost in overtime, 85-83, to Dazz last Monday, a setback which cost them the twice-to-beat edge.

Expected to lead Dazz are John Ferriols, June Simon, Joel Dualan, Eugene Tan, Cyrus Baguio and Allan Salangsang.

Cone renews Aces contract; Cablay gets ₱8.7M

By June Navarro

TIM Cone signed a fresh three-year pact with Alaska while Fil-American rookie Brandon Lee Cablay got a package equal to the contract secured by top pick Mike Cortez from the Aces.

Talk N' Text also sealed multi-million deals with its three Fil-American rookies–Harvey Carey, Jimmy Alapag and William Kahi Villa.

Though no figures were divulged, Cone, who engineered Alaska's championship dynasty in the 90s, would easily fatten his bank account by at least P16 million considering his worth as a multi-titled coach.

The 40-year-old Cone steered the Wilfred Uytengsu franchise to nine PBA titles during the last decade and the 2000 All Filipino Cup championship.

Cablay, a Hawaii-based playmaker who strutted his stuff for Vanguard University in the United States, inked an P8.7-million pact spread over three years.

Early this week, Cortez, this year's top rookie pick who led the De La Salle Green Archers to a "four-peat" in 2001, obtained a similar package from the Aces.

The 6-foot-3 Carey, picked fourth overall by the Phone Pals, secured a three-year deal to the tune of P8.3 million while Alapag, a peppery point guard from Los Angeles, California, got the same length of service worth P7.8 million. The Phone Pals granted the stocky, 230-pound Villa a two-year contract with a guaranteed purse of P2.3 million.

Selected fifth overall, Cablay stands to receive a maximum rookie salary of P150,000 in his first year with a corresponding 50-percent increase in the second and final years of his contract.

"He's (Cablay) very impressive. No wonder some teams are quite interested on him," said Alaska team manager Joaqui Trillo.

CONE

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Toronto vs New Jersey, 8:30 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.), Solar Sports, LA Lakers vs Houston, 10:30 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), ESPN

NBA Inside Stuff, 3:30 p.m. (r), Star Sports

TENNIS: Hyundai Hopman Cup XV, 9 a.m. (r), Star Sports

Volleyball tomorrow

THE 8TH Milo BEST Women's Volleyball League (WVL) reels off at 7:30 a.m. tomorrow at the St. Benedict College courts in Alabang Hills with defending champions PWU-JASMS (elementary) and St. Theresa's College (high school) leading the 32-team field.

Tournament commissioner Florentino "Kidd" Santos and his assistant, Monica Jorge, expect competition to be keener this year because of the big field.

Omen of things to come?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ALL'S well that ends well goes the saying.

I say that in the wake of what transpired in the PBA board's meeting the other day in which the NBN-4's Letter of Credit almost divided the 8-member league. Seemingly, it drove a wedge between the PBA's conformists on the one hand and the radicals on the other. But after some debate over the wisdom behind the move to give NBN-4 all the elbow room to produce the P200-million LC, the board finally gave its nod to the government station's wish to air the PBA games starting this year---on a vote of 6-2.

Is that an omen of things to come for new PBA Commissioner Noli Eala? Meaning, his reign will be tumultuous, if not to be marked by internal wranglings and impassioned speeches on the floor?

I say this because whereas in the past when most issues in the league were first coursed through the Office of the Commissioner, it is not so today after the PBA board re-engineered the league's charter only a while back to the effect that the commissioner's powers had been clipped "a little"---if you know what I mean.

That is not totally bad, though.

Democracy encourages a clash of ideas that is why it helps strengthen both the existence and moral fiber of every organization. For decades, the PBA has been styling itself as the bastion of national values, the benchmark of basketball quality that is why it is called the "Bayan of Superstars."

I'd like to believe it still is.

You may not be aware of this but the PBA has been, for years, straddled on hopes of reinventing itself so that it can stay afloat 28 summers after its birth in 1975. Silently, it celebrated the demise of the MBA (Metropolitan Basketball Association) for reasons that are obvious to you and me.

While I know that Alaska's Fred Uytengsu has always been known to call a spade a spade—a trait that his fellow board members must appreciate or the PBA could die of MAS (mutual admiration society)—I am a bit surprised about the tough stand put up by Talk N' Text governor Ricky Vargas regarding the NBN-4's Letter of Credit.

Happily surprised, that is.

Ricky was open enough to show his disgust over the board's kid-glove policy on the government station.

Attaboy.

If only in the name of Don Quixote, I wish to see more of that, Ricky Boy, in tandem with your fellow radical, Freddie not the dreamer. For the good of the league, for the good of this basketball republic.

Philracom invitational races start

COMING in the heels of another successful weeklong race card, Manila Jockey Club Inc. (MJCI), in cooperation with the Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom), spices up weekend horse racing action with the holding of seven topnotch Invitational Races at the San Lazaro Hippodrome.

Dubbed as the Philracom-MJCI New Year's Invitational Races, the club's weekend showcase will be bannered by two featured track encounters today and five other thrilling match-ups tomorrow. The seven highlight races carry guaranteed prize money ranging from P160,000 to P200,000 going to the winner, co-sponsored by MJCI and the Philracom.

"MJC is truly delighted to co-present these featured invitational races involving some of the country's top thoroughbreds and we are certainly grateful that the Philracom has generously backed the staging of these events by way of sponsorships," noted MJCI president and chief executive Alfonso Reyno Jr.

Headlining today's races would be the running of two guaranteed money races.

Set to compete in the P200,000 Philracom MJCI New Year's Invitational Race are five game gallopers led by recent winner Super Sharp, to be ridden by Class A journeyman Jonathan Hernandez. Battling the seasoned campaigner in the 1,500-meter race are Field Master, Master Ijhay, Gemstone and Cossane.

Meanwhile, seven chargers will be competing in the featured P160,000 winner guaranteed invitational. Among the protagonists are Standing Ovation, Winning Prize, Earth Angel, Meal Ticket, Tanging Ikaw, Spoiler and Carlo's Charm. Meal Ticket, Earth Angel and Tanging Ikaw are the early favorites for the race.

Both match-ups are no-bearing, no-effect races with the runners carrying identical handicap weights, ensuring that the race to the finish would truly be exciting.

Starting time for today's 14-race racing program at the San Lazaro Hippodrome has been set at 1:30 p.m.

5-on-5 water polo meet finals today

THE PHILIPPINE Amateur Swimming Association (PASA) will hold the finals of the 5-on-5 age group water polo league today at the Rizal Memorial pool.

Six teams, namely, Celebrity Sports Club, Quezon City Sports Club, Makati Y, Philippine Columbian Association, Lake City Swimming Club and Valle Verde Country Club will compete in the tourney sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission and PASA, now led by Monchito Ilagan.

Competition will be conducted in the 16 and under, 13 and under and 10 and under divisions from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

AMERICAN Andre Agassi serves against French Nicolas Escude at the Australian Open in Melbourne. Agassi won, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. AP

Agassi, Williams reach 4th round

MELBOURNE, Australia—Andre Agassi took a major step towards claiming a fourth Australian Open crown with a pressure four-set victory over dangerous Frenchman Nicolas Escude on Friday.

The three-time winner, bidding to become only the fourth man to win four Australian Open titles, reigned supreme after the 2-hour 48-minute joust on Rod Laver Arena to win 6-2, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 and reach the fourth round.

Agassi, in the bottom half of the draw away from world No.1 Lleyton Hewitt, will now have a round of 16 match against unseeded Argentinian baseliner Guillermo Coria on Sunday.

The seven-time Grand Slam winner extended his unbeaten run at the Australian Open to 16 matches after missing last year's tournament with a wrist injury.

Meanwhile, Venus Williams raised her game to lead a clutch of top seeds into the fourth round of the Australian Open here Friday.

The second-seeded American superstar cruised through the opening set of her match against Anca Barna but struggled in the second before clicking into gear and outclassing the world number 69, 6-1, 6-4.

Williams was joined in her half of the last 16 by fellow American Lindsay Davenport and Belgium's Justin Henin-Hardenne. *AFP*

DOT supports Asian trackfest

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SECRETARY Richard Gordon of the Department of Tourism has asked the House of Representatives to extend its help to the country's hosting of the Asian athletics championships this September.

House committee on youth and sports chair Monico Puentevella relayed this yesterday as the Bacolod representative firmed up his support to the biggest sporting event the country is hosting this year.

Gordon's representatives have already met with officials of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association early this week led by assistant secretary Rolando Reyes.

The staging of the event is one way of proving that the country remains "tourist-friendly," a theme similar to the DOT's battlecry in luring foreigners to visit the Philippines.

No less than 1,000 athletes and officials are expected to take part in the event we last hosted in 1993.

Various government agencies have also been tapped to comprise the organizing committee of the Sept. 18-25 affair where 44 countries are seeing action.

Among those who are requested to get involved in the hosting are the Department of Education and the Department of Interior and Local Government.

Education assistant secretary Teodoro Catindig yesterday met with athletics chief Go Teng Kok where they discussed the possibility of the DepEd handling the event's opening program, which was the departments contribution during the 1993 edition.

"We are very glad over the show of interest among the government agencies," said Go. "I'm sure the event will be a success not only for Philippine track and field but for the whole nation as well."

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain last year agreed to back up Patafa by citing possible improvements in the Rizal Memorial Track Stadium, which will also be used when the country hosts the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Shaq hit for Yao taunts

HOUSTON—The Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) will stage a protest Friday condemning alleged racial taunts aimed at Yao Ming of the Houston Rockets by Los Angeles Lakers center Shaquille O'Neal.

The protest, however, will merely serve as a backdrop for one of the most eagerly anticipated NBA clashes in recent years when Yao leads the Rockets against O'Neal and the three times champion Lakers Friday evening.

The contest pitting the two big men has attracted international attention and is expected to pull in a worldwide television audience in the hundreds of millions.

The OCA released a statement Thursday calling on the NBA to take a pro-active approach towards racism, saying that O'Neal's "derogatory and racial taunt" aimed at Yao on June 28 was"racially offensive and hurtful to the millions of Asian Americans" in the United States.

O'Neal has brushed aside the controversy, claiming the Chinese accent he used during an interview was meant as a joke.

The OCA responded by saying O'Neal's attempts at humor were a "misguided attempt to diffuse the public's outrage over his remarks and a hollow excuse to justify his prior racist statement". *Reuters*

MJ lifts Wizards past Magic

WASHINGTON—Michael Jordan picked up 32 points to pave the way for the Washington Wizards to score a comfortable 108-93 victory over the reeling Orlando Magic Thursday.

Jordan exploded for 20 first-quarter points on 7-of-11 shooting as Washington opened up a 38-22 lead, its best start of the season.

"I got in good rhythm early on," he told reporters. "I was able to get the guys out of the blocks." Washington closed out with a 34-22 last frame, Larry Hughes collecting a total of 22 points. "It was a great effort by everybody," Jordan said.

NBA scoring leader Tracy McGrady notched 31 points for the Magic, who have lost six of their last eight games. Orlando's Mike Miller was next best with 14. *Reuters*

Kidd, Nets on TV

THE NBA's best point guard, Jason Kidd, and his New Jersey Nets take on the Toronto Raptors "live" at 8:30 a.m. today (Saturday, Jan. 18) on Solar Sports (Channel 29 on Skycable and Homecable), with a replay at 10 p.m.

Bowe meted 18 months in jail

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Former heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe was sentenced Thursday to 18 months in federal prison for the 1998 abduction of his estranged wife and children.

Bowe was in court for the three-minute hearing, at which US District Judge Graham Mullen followed through on an appeals court's October sentencing order.

Mullen twice previously had given Bowe lighter sentences that were rejected by the appeals court.

After Bowe is released from prison, he must serve two years' supervised release.

Bowe's lawyer, Robert Altchiler, indicated the fighter could return to the ring after he serves his time.

"He's a young and vibrant 35," Altchiler said. "My thinking is that he will fight again. ... He's a fighter. He's a good fighter. He's still physically able to do it, he's still mentally able to do it. It's the only way he's made money in the past." *AP*

Disabled boxers to receive help

DESTITUTE and disabled Filipino professional boxers will receive long-awaited financial assistance on Jan. 31 at the Games and Amusements Board's main office on the second floor of Legaspi Towers 200, along Paseo de Roxas in Makati City.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has been invited to lead the distribution of funds at 4 p.m.

GAB chair Eduardo R. Villanueva, who is also head of the Disabled Filipino Boxers Trust Fund, and the two members of the Board of Trustees—Philippine Boxing Association president Gov. Raul A. Daza and Philippine Sportswriters Association president Roberto Cuevas—will assist President Arroyo.

Fishing tourism

COMMENTARY
By Vic Vic Villavicencio

WE'VE said it before, we'll say it again: Sport fishing tourism is something that should be given more attention. Archipelagic as the Philippines is, the potential for water sports-related tourism is tremendous.

We pit our hopes on DOT Secretary Dick Gordon. He is himself a sport fisherman. Back in those days when he was the top man of SBMA, he relaxed from his many duties and concerns by going out to the fishing spots within Subic Bay on his boat, Brave Heart.

There were times when he would lend his boat to close friends, and he would join them on board later in the day. For small talk, for a few drinks, and most of all to wet a line himself. It must have been the fisherman in him that contributed to his becoming a staunch marine conservationist, too.

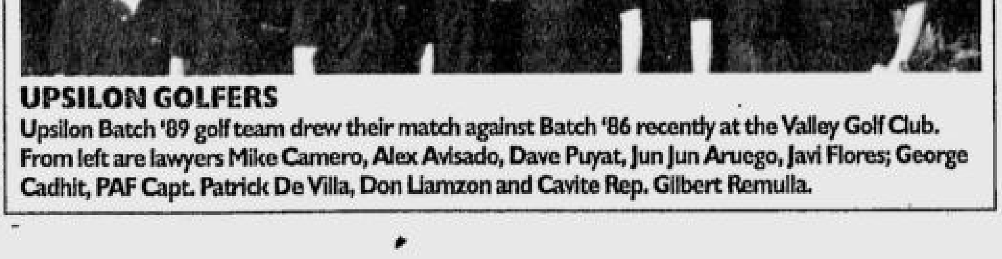
Now that he is the country's top tourism promoter, Secretary Dick Gordon is in the best position to promote sport fishing not just in Subic but throughout all our over 7,000 islands.

Look, while other countries have fishing seasons dictated by weather conditions, we have no such limitations. Pick any month and there is always somewhere that one can happily indulge in the fishing sport.

There are all kinds of anglers. Some prefer the thrills of big game trolling. Others get their kicks from reef bottom fishing. Still others are partial to fresh water fishing in Caliraya or Lumot lakes. And then there are the passionate ones who go for all of the above.

Tourist have their choice. Any time, any preference. We just have to let them know what we have. And provide the facilities to make their trips something to talk and brag about when they go home.

Tourism and environment conservation are as inseparable as the bow and arrow. We trust that Secretary Dick Gordon and the new DENR Secretary, Ms. Bebet Gozun will soon get together on this.



UPSILON GOLFERS
Upsilon Batch '89 golf team drew their match against Batch '86 recently at the Valley Golf Club. From left are lawyers Mike Camero, Alex Avisado, Dave Puyat, Jun Jun Aruego, Javi Flores; George Cadhit, PAF Capt. Patrick De Villa, Don Liamzon and Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla.

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2 city dad's aides abducted

HEAVILY armed men abducted a security aide and one acquaintance of Manila 5th District Councilor Richard Ibay in front of the councilor's house in San Andres Bukid, Manila at around 2 p.m. yesterday. Victims John Palileo, 35, and Wilfredo Avila, Ibay's security aide, remained missing at press time. Another Ibay aide, Victor Gabiola, was also abducted but later freed in Makati. *Philip Tubeza*

Comfort after cremation

By Philip Tubeza

SHORTLY after topnotch Ateneo law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas was cremated yesterday, his family and girlfriend received a piece of comforting news: all the solo suspect wanted is an escort before he turns himself in.

Suspect Cola Ditato, 38, wanted to find somebody he can trust to accompany him to the National Bureau of Investigation headquarters before he surrenders, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco announced yesterday.

Wycoco made the statement as pressure built up on the NBI to nab the suspect.

Even Presidential Anti-Graft Commission chief Dario Rama went to the NBI on Thursday to prod the bureau to arrest the culprit.

Ditato, of Block 21, Lot 3, Barangay Datu Esmael, Dasmariñas, Cavite, is trying to negotiate with the bureau through a relative who also happens to be a "mid-level" NBI officer, Wycoco said.

"Ditato has a relative here. He's looking for somebody to accompany him to the NBI," he said.

"If he surrenders, then that's good. But whether he surrenders or not, we are already going after him," Wycoco added.

He said Ditato had initially wanted to surrender to the mayor of Dasmariñas, Cavite but he later changed his mind.

The suspect and his wife Norania closed their dry goods shop and went into hiding two days after the killing.

Wycoco said the suspect is still "in the vicinity of Metro Manila."

He added that Ditato remains the sole suspect in the Llamas slay so far.

Wycoco added that the NBI would give Ditato "the usual protection under the law" if he surrenders.

Rama went to the NBI on Thursday armed with a letter to follow-up the case.

He allegedly wanted to know why Ditato has remained at large although a witness had positively identified him and since his motorcycle was even found in the crime scene.

Wycoco explained that it was the PNP that was leading the investigation. He said the NBI was just helping the police catch the killer.

Llamas, a promising law graduate who took the last bar exams, was shot in cold blood on January 10 after a traffic altercation at the corner of Taft and Buendia avenues in Pasay City.

Llamas was cremated at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium in Parañaque yesterday.

His ashes, kept in two separate urns, were taken by his mother, Marilou, and girlfriend Sid Castro, said to be in the top three of her law class.

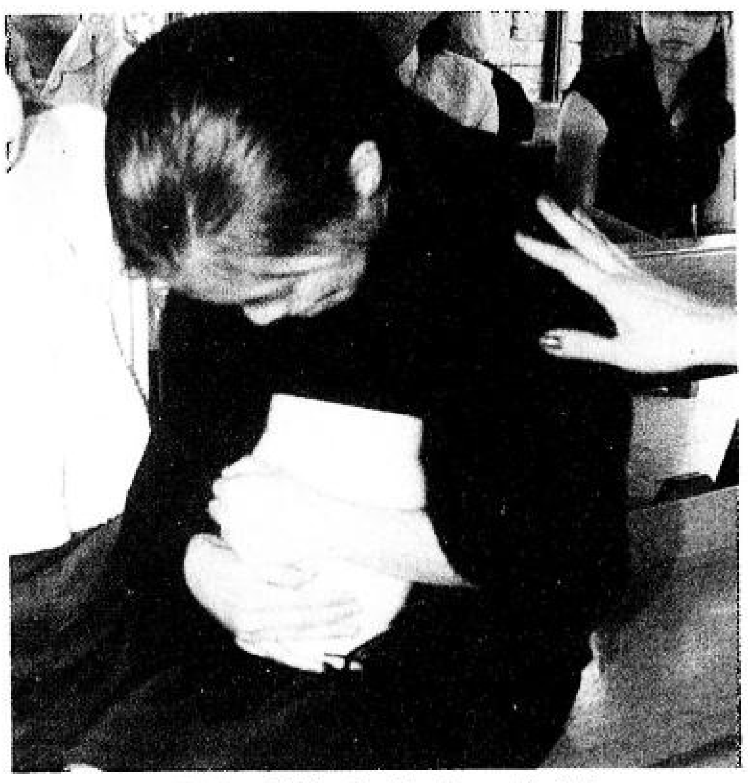
Llamas, according to investigators, had apparently bumped the gunman's motorcycle, thus causing the suspect to fall.

Llamas reportedly continued driving but the gunman got up and drove after him on a motorcycle.

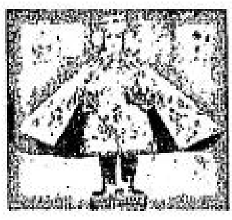
The assailant reportedly caught up with the victim and a confrontation ensued.

LLAMAS

DITATO



END of a love affair has girlfriend embracing only half of Jay Llamas' ashes. MANDY NAVASERO



Sto. Niño seabound

A MASSIVE fluvial procession that re-enacts the journey of the Sto. Niño from Acapulco, Mexico to Manila will be held today on the eve of the celebration of the 2003 Tondo Fiesta.

Spearheaded by former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez as hermano mayor, Carmen Anita Lopez-Del Rosario as hermana mayor and Sto. Niño Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos, the fluvial procession on the eve of the fiesta highlights this year's festivities after an absence of several decades from the religious rites honoring the sacred icon.

Flower-festooned fishermen's bancas from nearby towns and provinces of Navotas, Malabon, Bulacan, Pampanga and Rizal and gaily-bedecked sailboats and yachts from the Manila Yacht Club will escort the 10m x 70m barge, converted into a cathedral-like pagoda that will ferry the holy image of the Sto. Niño.

The fluvial procession will navigate the waters from Pier 2 at the mouth of Manila Bay, northward to the Regis Romero compound across Smokey Mountain to Pier 18, at a cruising speed of 3 knots. The Sto. Niño of Tondo was a gift of a rich Spanish merchant to the Filipinos in the 16th century. The Archbishop of Manila ruled that the image be enthroned in the Tondo Church for patronage, even as other regions vied for its possession.

Top Aquila alumni to prosecute case

By Christian V. Esguerra

MEMBERS of Ateneo Law School's Aquila Legis Fraternity have formed a panel of lawyers that would prosecute the killer of their fallen "brod" Jose Ramon Llamas.

The three-man legal panel will be composed of prominent alumni of the law school's fraternity and will be headed by Vic Verdadero.

"Our priority right now is to give justice to (Llamas)," a fraternity spokesman told reporters after the topnotch Ateneo law graduate's funeral rites at the St. Alphonsus Liguori Chapel in Magallanes, Makati.

Aquila lawyers would also provide legal services to the seven witnesses currently under the custody of the Pasay city police.

The panel had begun talking to witnesses last Friday.

Other fraternity members are raising funds to finance the operations of the legal team until Llamas' killer is convicted, it was announced.

Once justice is served to the Llamas family, the fraternity would then launch a series of activities urging the government to prohibit civilians from carrying firearms, it was added.

In tagging the trader as the primary suspect, the NBI relied heavily on the testimony of a middle-aged male witness who was driving near the corner of Buendia and Taft Avenues when Llamas was killed.

In his sworn statement, the witness described the gunman as burly, dark-skinned, curly haired, and wearing a black shirt, blue denims, and yellow basketball sneakers. The description closely resembled a picture of solo suspect Cola M. Ditato taken in 1998.

The witness said he got a good view of the killer because he trailed him from the crime site to the Manila Sanitarium Hospital where the gunman hailed a tricycle, and later to Harrison Plaza.

"After the shooting, he walked casually as though nothing had happened. He was even checking his gun while walking," the witness said in Filipino.

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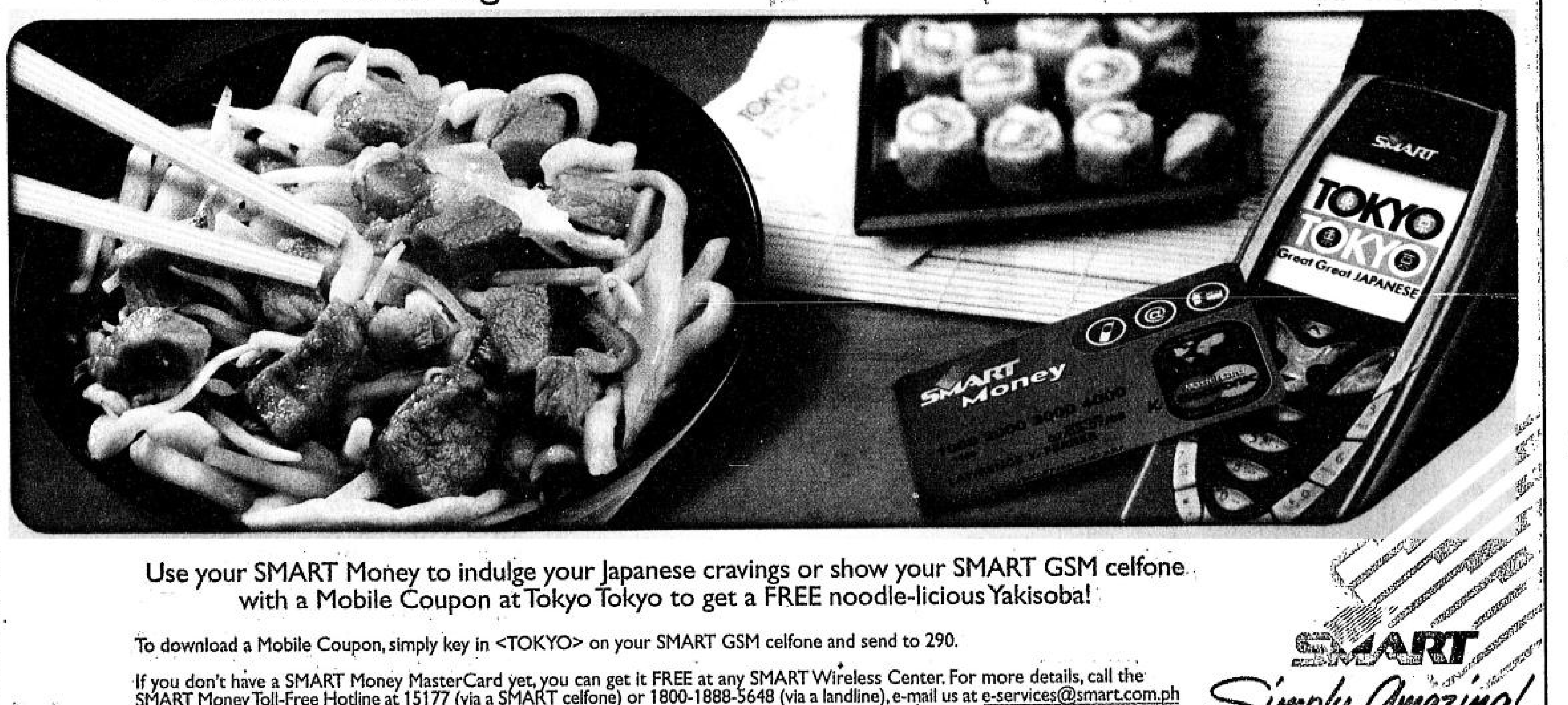

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A dead woman walking

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

MARIA Teresa Santos of Marikina is a dead woman walking. With thousands of soldiers and policemen wanting to get their hands on her, it's only a matter of time before she makes a "viaje." Viaje is a police slang for a trip to the cemetery.

Why would they want Santos, in her mid- 30s, dead?

"*Kapag nakita ko 'yan sa daan, kakalawitin ko siya* (If I saw her in the street, I would abduct her and then kill her)," said a cop assigned at Camp Crame.

* * *

His sentiments are shared by thousands of other soldiers and cops, mostly non-officers and middle ranking officers, who were allegedly duped by Santos.

Santos used to run an investment company, MTST (the first three letters stand for her name), that gave 15 percent interest monthly to investors for a period not more than six months.

For a six-month period, MTST gave earnings of 90 percent of the invested amount.

In contrast, bank deposits earn a maximum of nine percent interest annually.

* * *

Translated into real figures, for example, if one put in P1 million with MTST, he would have earned P900,000 in six months and got back the P1 million investment.

The first hundred investors got windfalls. Word got around fast.

The early investors recruited other investors whom they probably gave five percent per month on their money. The early investors then earned 10 percent on other people's money!

* * *

Most of the early investors were generals and colonels in the military and the police. These top brass earned from their subordinates by convincing them to invest their money with them at say, five or 10 percent return on their investments.

Because of the high return on investments, low-ranking soldiers and cops borrowed big amounts from lending institutions like the Armed Forces and Police Savings and Loan Association, Inc. or AFPSLAI. The amounts they borrowed from financial institutions were deductible to from salaries or pensions.

Thousands of civilians, soldiers and cops invested their life savings with MTST.

* * *

Civilians, on the other hand, got loans from the banks with their property as collateral.

According to reports, there was even a police major who invested P20 million with MTST. The money apparently was the fruit of his corrupt activities.

* * *

Then, Maria Teresa Santos disappeared, bringing along with her an estimated P2 billion in investments. Her husband, SPO1 Orlando Santos of the Marikina police station, also stopped going to work.

The Santoses have bought mansions, resorts, condominium units, jewelry and invested in several business ventures, according to sources close to them.

But Maria Teresa Santos could not hide for long. The very long arm of the generals and colonels that she had duped caught up with her.

* * *

Last time she was heard from, she was being held somewhere in the Bicol region by a major of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

She was being made to cough up the millions of pesos she allegedly received from some generals.

If she cannot return those millions of pesos, there's no telling she will ever surface again.

Goodbye and good riddance, Ms Santos!

* * *

This item is in defense of a friend, Curtis Jay "Curts" Perry, an American who lives inside Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) complex in Olongapo City.

I can't believe Perry did what he is being accused of by a certain Eduardo Prieto, also an SBMA resident.

Ed Prieto charged that Perry beat him up. He showed his black-eye allegedly inflicted by Curts.

* * *

A newspaper (not the INQUIRER) reported that Curts started the fight with Prieto inside Vasco's Nautical Pub.

The report said that Curts, standing at 6 feet 3 inches, beat up the much shorter Ed Prieto, who stood at 5 feet 10. Curts allegedly started the fight, the report added.

The report is wrong about the two guys' heights. It's the other way around. Curtis is 5'10" while Ed Prieto is 6'3".

* * *

I've known Curts for about three years now. He's a very amiable guy. He has that permanent smile on his face. He's a very peaceful man and can hold his drink. I've drunk Scotch and Whisky several times with him and I never saw him become aggressive even in the heat of drunken arguments.

In fact, it was Ed Prieto who reportedly started the fight by hitting Curts three times. Curts won over Prieto because he's a wrestler and knows how to box.

How do I know this? From the affidavits of two other Americans, both pilots of Federal Express, Steven F. Oullet and Donald C. Hill. They said it was Prieto who hit Curts first without any provocation.

Fire eats up State Theater...

THE OLD and abandoned State Theater in Sta. Cruz, Manila was burned down yesterday morning after a two-hour fire.

Workers on the fifth floor of the theater, located at the corner of Rizal Avenue and Paterno Street, were removing planks of wood when the fire broke out, said arson investigator FO3 Rodelio Nelvis, of the Manila Fire Department.

"The fire could have started due to a cigarette carelessly thrown away or by sparks from wielding equipment," Nelvis said.

He said the theater was already run-down and there were many combustible materials lying around.

Nelvis added that it could not have been faulty electrical wiring since the theater's electricity had been cut off a long time ago.

He said the blaze began at around 4:25 a.m. and quickly spread inside the building.

The fire reached the fifth alarm and was put under control only at around 5:45 a.m. after firemen arrived.

Police said the firetrucks had a hard time getting to the place due to the narrow streets.

The fire official said the blaze was put out at around 6:30 a.m. *Philip Tubeza*

...community in Las Piñas

TWO BOYS playing with match sticks accidentally started a fire that left hundreds of their neighbors homeless and destroyed around P40 million worth of property in Las Piñas City yesterday, fire authorities said.

An unidentified woman suffered superficial burns, three others passed out, and two people were said to have gone missing during the fire that began just before lunchtime at the house of one Marciano Puyos, 56.

Puyos' sons, Marvin, 7, and Jonas, 6, were allegedly playing with matchsticks inside the bedroom of their father's house minutes before the fire broke. Flames then engulfed the house and spread to neighboring structures on Interior Camia Street, TS Cruz Subdivision, Barangay Almanza, said SFO4 Regalado Manahan.

The fire reached Task Force Bravo before it was extinguished at around 2:15 p.m. *Christian Esguerra*

Confessed Baron killer says Crame cops harassing him

By Christian Esguerra and TJ Burgonio

REWARD
ONE MILLION PESOS!
For information leading to the arrest of

CHIEF Supt. Romeo Maganto and Lloyd Cervantes hold out a copy of the bill containing the pictures of fugitives Supt. Rafael Cardeño and Sonny Camacho—primary suspects in the murder of Baron Cervantes.
ERIK ARAZAS

THE BARON Cervantes murder case took a curious turn when the confessed assassin asked the court to move him out of his tightly secured detention cell in Camp Crame.

In a motion filed Wednesday, the lawyer of ex-Marine Sgt. Joseph Mostrales asked Judge Bonifacio Sanz Maceda to transfer him either to the Las Piñas City Jail or the National Bureau of Investigation.

Lawyer Edgardo Era claimed Mostrales and co-accused Jaime Centeno and Erlindo Torres were being harassed by officers manning the former headquarters of the disbanded National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force.

Era cited an incident on Dec. 10 in which police officers supposedly ordered the three accused to leave their detention cells for a hearing in Las Piñas. There was no hearing scheduled that day.

"You have to see (the case) in a political context," Era told the INQUIRER yesterday. "People are tagging prominent political personalities without any basis. My client's life may be in danger because of this."

In an interview on Thursday, Leonard De Vera, lawyer of the Cervantes family, described the motion as absurd and could be the handiwork of fugitive Supt. Rafael Cardeño, the alleged brains behind the murder of the government informant.

"Who in his right mind would want to have his client transferred from a relatively safe detention cell to a much dangerous jail?" he asked. "Mostrales could easily be liquidated in Las Piñas."

De Vera alleged that Cardeño could be moving to have Mostrales, Centeno and Torres killed to prevent them from testifying against him.

The three had earlier identified the police official as the one who had hired them and three other men to gun down Cervantes. The three other men—Eugene Radam, Rodolfo Patinio and Diosdado Santos—were killed last September in a supposed shootout with police in Cavite.

"Once we lose Mostrales, Centeno, and Torres, we would no longer have any case against Cardeño," De Vera pointed out.

The Cervantes family's claim that Cardeño continues to receive salary from the Philippine National Police even after he has gone into hiding, has upset Director General Hermogenes Ebdane.

Ebdane yesterday flatly denied the Cervantes family's claim that Cardeño is still on the payroll.

"Cardeño is not receiving any pay," Ebdane emphatically told reporters yesterday. "You tell that to the Cervantes family."

He said contrary to the Cervantes' family's allegations, Cardeño had been dropped from the rolls and his records were now being reviewed for his eventual dismissal from the service.

"After the case, if he is convicted, we will forfeit all of his pending remuneration," Ebdane said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, January 16, 2003
1st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 3:7-14
Gospel: Mk 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and begged him, "If you so will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." The leprosy left the man at once and he was made clean. As Jesus sent the man away, he sternly warned him, "Don't tell anyone about this, but go and show yourself to the priest and for the cleansing bring the offering ordered by Moses; in this way you will make your declaration."

However, as soon as the man went out, he began spreading the news everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter any town. But even though he stayed in the rural areas, people came to him from everywhere.

Commentary

Compassion allows Jesus to see beyond the physical suffering of the leper into his isolation and loneliness. And so, even though it was not necessary for the leper's healing, Jesus "stretched out his hand and touched him." This was probably the first human touch the leper had experienced in years, condemned as he was by Jewish law, to excommunicate himself from society. With this touch, Jesus rendered himself ritually impure, becoming tainted, as it were, with the stain of the leper. But this seems to be of no concern to Jesus. His sole desire is that one isolated and excluded from human community experience contact and communion once again.

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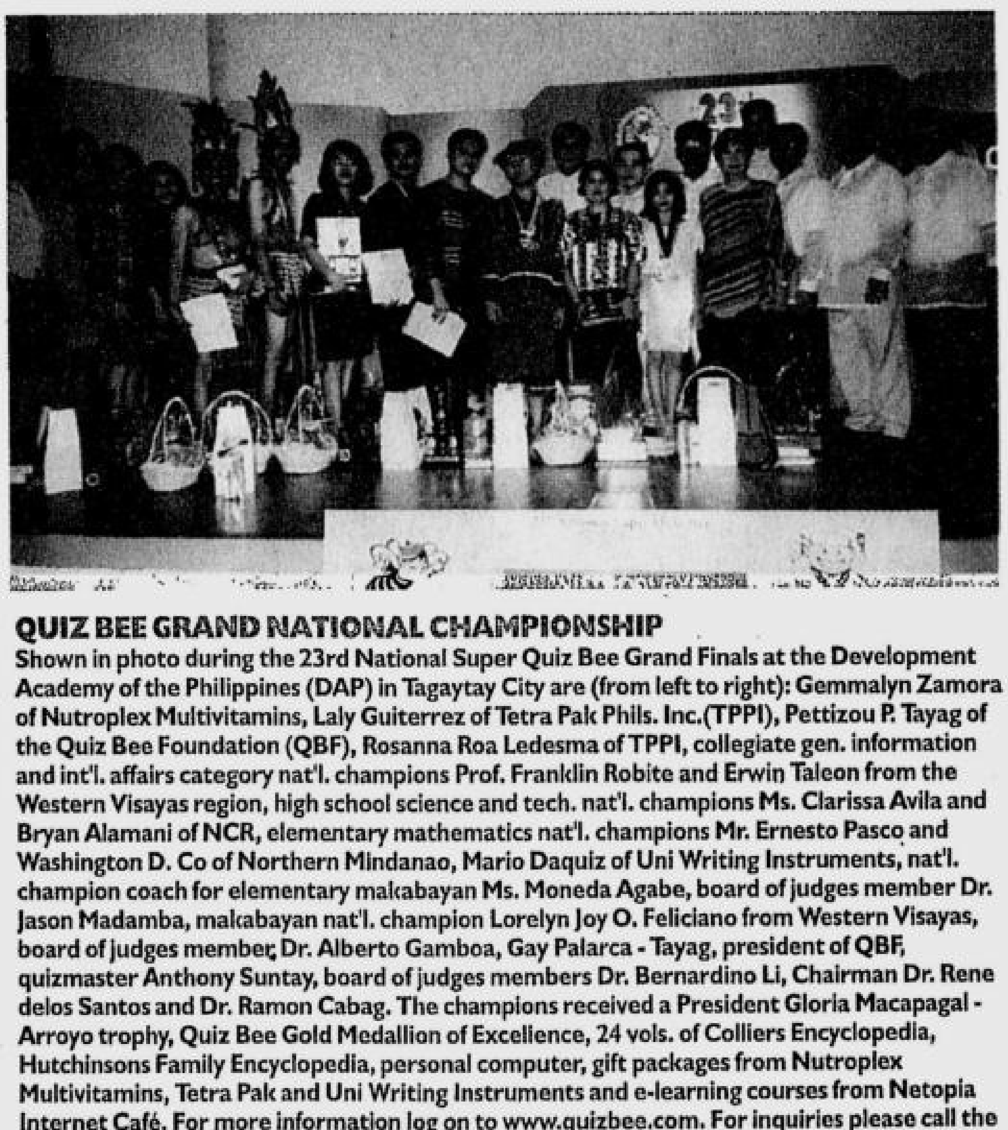
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS—Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in administrative cases does not cease upon retirement of the respondent judicial officer—Cessation from office of a respondent because of death or retirement neither warrants the dismissal of the administrative complaint filed against him while he was still in the service nor renders said administrative case moot and academic. In other words, the jurisdiction that was this Court's at the time of the filing of the administrative complaint is not lost by the mere fact that the respondent public official had ceased in office during the pendency of his case. The retirement of a judge or any judicial officer from the service does not preclude the finding of any administrative liability to which he shall still be answerable. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, Cortez v. Soria, A. M. No. P-02-1614, July 31, 2002] DIGEST BY R. B. VERA



QUIZ BEE GRAND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Shown in photo during the 23rd National Super Quiz Bee Grand Finals at the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) in Tagaytay City are (from left to right): Gemmalyn Zamora of Nutroplex Multivitamins, Laly Guiterrez of Tetra Pak Phils. Inc.(TPPI), Pettizou P. Tayag of the Quiz Bee Foundation (QBF), Rosanna Roa Ledesma of TPPI, collegiate gen. information and int'l. affairs category nat'l. champions Prof. Franklin Robite and Erwin Taleon from the Western Visayas region, high school science and tech. nat'l. champions Ms. Clarissa Avila and Bryan Alamani of NCR, elementary mathematics nat'l. champions Mr. Ernesto Pasco and Washington D. Co of Northern Mindanao, Mario Daquiz of Uni Writing Instruments, nat'l. champion coach for elementary makabayan Ms. Moneda Agabe, board of judges member Dr. Jason Madamba, makabayan nat'l. champion Lorelyn Joy O. Feliciano from Western Visayas, board of judges member, Dr. Alberto Gamboa, Gay Palarca - Tayag, president of QBF, quizmaster Anthony Suntay, board of judges members Dr. Bernardino Li, Chairman Dr. Rene delos Santos and Dr. Ramon Cabag. The champions received a President Gloria Macapagal - Arroyo trophy, Quiz Bee Gold Medallion of Excellence, 24 vols. of Colliers Encyclopedia, Hutchinsons Family Encyclopedia, personal computer, gift packages from Nutroplex Multivitamins, Tetra Pak and Uni Writing Instruments and e-learning courses from Netopia Internet Café. For more information log on to www.quizbee.com. For inquiries please call the Ms. Pettizou P. Tayag, Quiz Bee Foundation at 7120682.

Appeals court acts to resolve PTA impasse

THE COURT of Appeals has ordered Robert Dean Barbers to submit within 10 days his comment on the petition questioning his appointment as Philippine Tourism Authority general manager.

The petition was filed by Nixon Kua, an appointee of former President Joseph Estrada, who continues to hold office at the Philippine Tourism Authority.

In its resolution dated Jan. 10, the CA's Eleventh Division instructed Barbers to submit his comment, not a motion to dismiss, wherein he should also "show cause why GM Kua's petition for Quo Warranto with Damages and prayer for temporary restraining order and a writ of preliminary mandatory and prohibitory injunction should not be granted."

In his petition, Kua has also asked the CA to declare him as the legitimate PTA general manager and not Barbers who was appointed as his replacement "despite the fact that he enjoys a fixed six-year term of office under the PTA Charter."

Alarmed by the problems caused by the PTA leadership crisis, employees of the Authority led by union officers of the Association of Dedicated Employees of the PTA (ADEPT), made an appeal before the CA on Monday for a quick resolution of the case.

"This issue is beyond Mr. Barbers and Mr. Kua," ADEPT officials said. "This case is about the security of tenure of rank-and-file employees of the PTA, and the confusion and anxiety among officers and employees."

Pag-Asa ng Masa! Magbabalik na!

Ousted Malabon City councilors cling to their posts

By Tina Santos

TWO Malabon City "excess" councilors continue to cling to their posts despite the Commission on Elections en banc directive for them to step down after the polls body affirmed its nullification of the aldermen's proclamation.

In a phone interview, Isagani Santos said that he and Rogelio Yanga would still not recognize the latest Comelec order.

"As far as I am concerned, that is not yet final," Santos said. "Besides, the order should already come from the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and not the Comelec."

Yanga could not be reached for comment.

Santos also threatened to sue Vice Mayor Jayjay Yambao for alleged ignorance of the law and for political harassment, saying that when Yambao was acting mayor during Vicencio's suspension for graft charges, Yambao refused to recognize the two councilors even without a Supreme Court order.

The Comelec order was dated Jan. 7, 2003 and signed by Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and commissioners Luzviminda Tancangco, Rufino Javier, Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadain, Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr.

Responding to a clarification sought earlier by the DILG, the Comelec said Interior Secretary Jose Lina can now properly act based on Resolution No. 4563 that the polls body promulgated on Sept. 2, 2002, which declared the proclamation of Santos and Yanga, close allies of Vicencio, as null and void.

Gawad Kalinga alliance

COUPLES for Christ and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority have formed a strategic alliance to provide the low-income and the unemployed sectors of society the opportunity to enhance capabilities in enterprise management and uplift economic conditions, according to Tesda Director General Dante V. Liban.

Liban has appointed Tesda Provincial Director Carlos S. Flores as national coordinator for the "Gawad Kalinga," a livelihood training program of CFC geared at improving the plight of these marginalized sectors.

He said Tesda is mandated by law to come up with programs and projects in support of the development of quality Filipino middle-level workforce responsive to and in accordance with Philippine development goals and priorities.

CFC is a non-stock, non-profit and non-government organization committed to contribute to the "Gawad Kalinga" work program on livelihood, technical and entrepreneurship training in depressed areas nationwide.

Liban said he is confident Director Flores can steer "Gawad Kalinga" as an important component in his poverty alleviation program.

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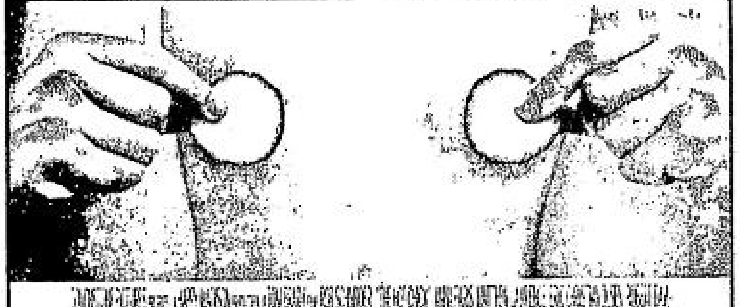

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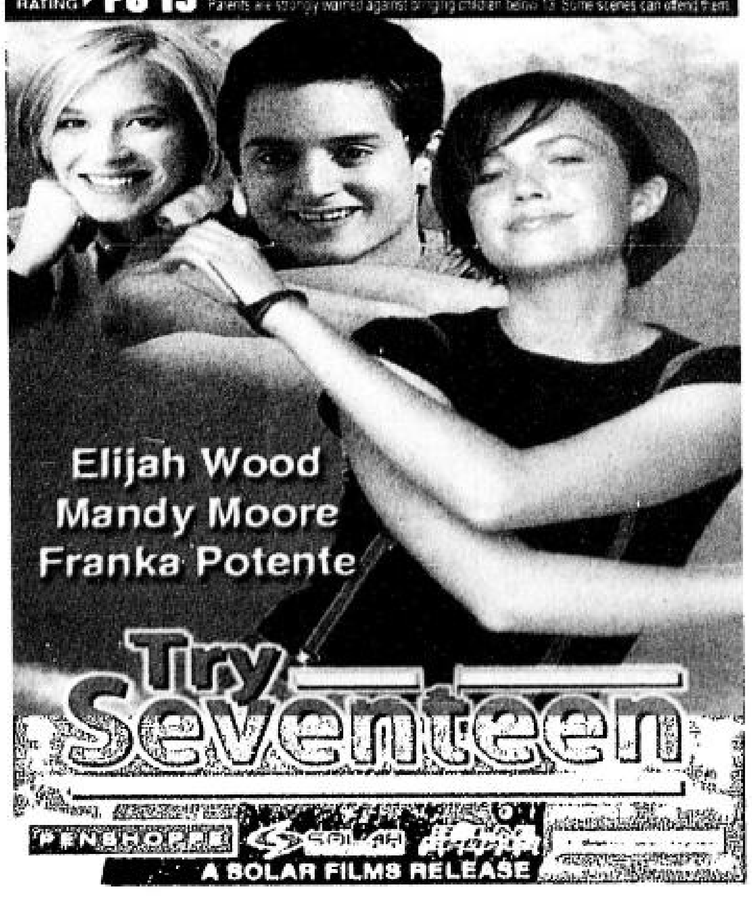

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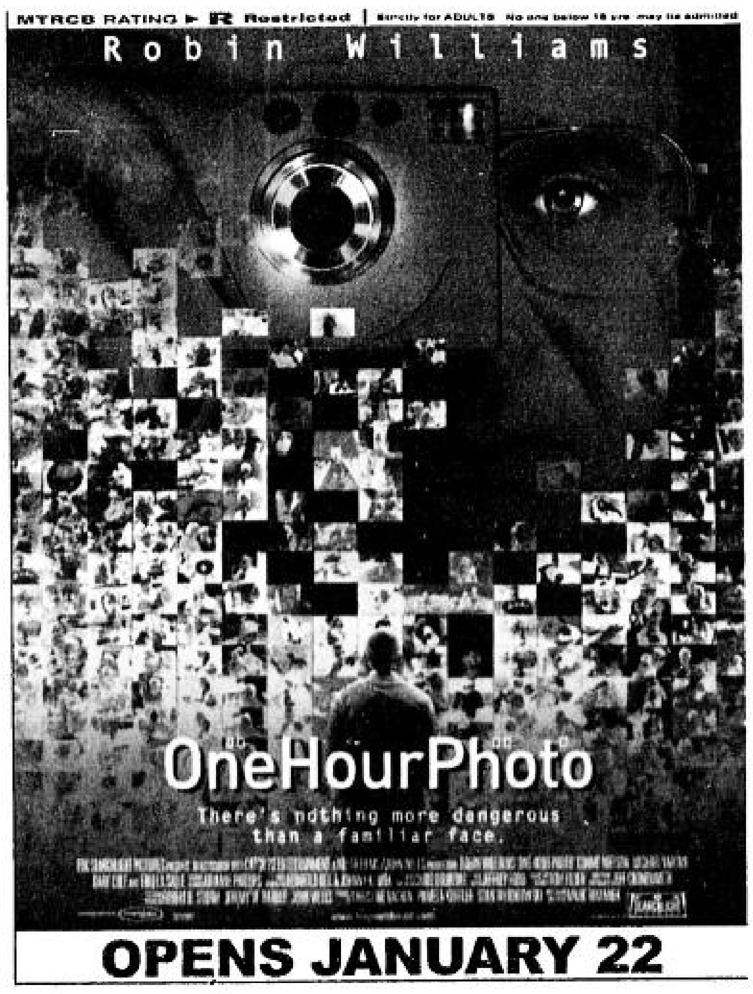
Robin Williams
OneHourPhoto
There's nothing more dangerous than a familiar face.

OPENS JANUARY 22

OPENS JANUARY 22
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3	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:20, 4:00, 11:20
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	HEAVEN
6	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
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1	RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)
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	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:10, 3:40, 7:10, 10:40
	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:50, 4:20, 7:50, 11:20
4	HALF PAST DEAD 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20
	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD) 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20

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1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	LORD OF THE RING
5	KERIDA

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	KERIDA
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4	LORD OF THE RING
5	THE RING
6	HALF PAST DEAD

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	AGIMAT

PREMIERE CINEMA
THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to 13
LORD OF THE RING

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	MANO PO
2	LASTIKMAN

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	KERIDA
3	BANGKERO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
4	THE RING
5	MANO PO
6	BANGKERO
7 (DTS)	HEAVEN
8 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
9 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	KERIDA
2	LASTIKMAN
3	BANGKERO
4 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
5	THE RING
6 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
7 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
8	MANO PO
9	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	BANGKERO
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
5	KERIDA

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	BANGKERO
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
4	KERIDA
5 (SDDS)	THE RING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BANGKERO

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BANGKERO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	KERIDA
Lords	BANGKERO
Jennet	RESERVE

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Mandaluyong
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1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LORD OF THE RING
3	BANGKERO
4	LASTIKMAN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	BANGKERO
3	THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	KERIDA

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	DEKADA '70
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	BANGKERO
2	HULA MO HULI KO

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Araneta
MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	LASTIKMAN
2	KERIDA
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HALF PAST DEAD
4 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
5 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
6	HEAVEN
7	MANO PO

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185, 534.2198

1	KERIDA
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE RING
2 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	THE RING
2 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	HALF PAST DEAD
4	LASTIKMAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	LIKE MIKE
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
3 (DOLBY)	LASTIKMAN
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	LASTIMAN
2	KERIDA
3 (DOLBY)	LONG TIME DEAD
4 (DTS)	SWIM FAN

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	LONG TIME DEAD
2 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
3	KERIDA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	RESERVE
2	BANGKERO
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
4	THE RING
5	MALDITA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	THE RINGF
3	KERIDA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	THE RING

Mega Center Mall
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1	BROTHER HOOD OF THE WOLF
2	LAPU LAPU
3 (DTS)	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4 (DOLBY)	LASTIKMAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

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(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MASARAP NA PUGAD

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	LASTIKMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	LONG TIME DEAD

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
2	LASTIKMAN
3 (DTS ES)	THE RING
4	HALF PAST DEAD

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571

1	LASTIKMAN
2	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
4 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

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2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	LASTIKMAN
7	BANGKERO
8	MANO PO

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HEAVEN
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	BANGKERO
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	LASTIKMAN
7	HALF PAST DEAD
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	MANO PO
10	KERIDA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9360749

1	HEAVEN
2	DEKADA '70
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6	LASTIKMAN
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9	HALF PAST DEAD
10	KERIDA
11	BANGKERO
12	MANO PO

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	HEAVEN
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
7	BANGKERO
8	LASTIKMAN
9	RING (JAPANESE)
10	RING (JAPANESE)
11	MANO PO
12	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6	HEAVEN
7	MANO PO
8	KERIDA
9	LASTIKMAN
10	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
11	RING (JAPANESE)
12	BANGKERO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	LASTIKMAN
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	MANO PO
4	RING (JAPANESE)
5	HEAVEN
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8098888

1	HEAVEN
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	BANGKERO
6	KERIDA
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	MANO PO
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY CEBU
2313879

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	REPLI-KATE
4	LIKE MIKE
5	LASTIKMAN
6	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
7	MANO PO
8	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	VAMPS
2	CLOSED
3	SWIMFAN
4	MANO PO
5	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	CLOSED
8	LASTIKMAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	LOTR : THE TWO TOWERS
2	LOTR : THE TWO TOWERS
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LASTIKMAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	BANGKERO
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	LASTIKMAN

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	SWIMFAN
3	MANO PO
4	GISING NA SI ADAN
5	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	THE RING
2	LIKE MIKE
3	REPLI-KATE
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-0976

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD VERSION) 10:00 FS/10:15 MF/12:35/2:55/5:15/7:35/ 9:25 LFS/10:00 LMF/11:50 END
2	LORD OF THE RINGS: The Two Towers 11:30 FS/12:00 MF/3:40/7:20/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/2:10 END

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4	LORD OF THE RINGS II
5	THE RING US VERSION
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
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10	MANO PO

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2	THE RING US VERSION
3	HEAVEN
4	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	LORD OF THE RINGS II

Metro East - Marcos hway
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1	HEAVEN
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	LORD OF THE RINGS II
4	THE RING US VERSION
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	LORD OF THE RINGS II
8	LASTIKMAN

Novaliches
935-3229-30

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	LASTIKMAN
4	HEAVEN
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	MANO PO
7	THE RING US VERSION
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	LASTIKMAN

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875-1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
3	THE RING US VERSION
4	LASTIKMAN
5	LORD OF THE RINGS II
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II

Imus
471-8188 / 875-3838

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	LASTIKMAN
3	LORD OF THE RINGS II
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	BANGKERO
6	THE RING US VERSION

Sta. Rosa Laguna

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	THE RING US VERSION
4	MANO PO
5	LASTIKMAN

Bacolod
441-0453 / 0459

1	THE RING US VERSION
2	REPLI-KATE
3	MANO PO
4	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
5	HULA MO HULI KO
6	DOUBLE SEDUCTION

Iloilo
336-8077-78

1	THE RING US VERSION
2	SWIMFAN
3	VAMPS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	BROTHERHOOD OF WOLF
6	MANO PO

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Ma of tagged mastermind in missionary rob-slay surrenders son to police

By Alcuin Papa

THE MOTHER of the alleged mastermind in the brutal murder of a missionary and her assistant surrendered her son to Quezon City police yesterday.

Ralph Lester Roxas, 18, was turned over by his mother Leticia to the Central Police District Criminal Investigation Unit to face investigation and interrogation.

The mother refused to be interviewed by reporters.

Roxas is the alleged mastermind in the robbery and brutal killing of Myrnaloie Beebe, 58, a missionary of the London-based Osbourne Missionaries; and her assistant Jovelyn Parejo, 21, last Wednesday.

SUSPECT Austerio

The bodies of the two victims were found bloodied inside the bedroom of their house at 13 Viola St., St. Dominic Subdivision, Barangay Culiat, Quezon City.

About P80,000, assorted jewelry and two Nokia 3310 cellphones were missing from the victims' home, police said.

Another suspect, Nomer Mallo, who supposedly escaped with the help of his mother Marilyn, is being hunted down by police.

Mallo's mother Marilyn, who was presented to reporters yesterday along with Roxas, is facing charges of obstruction of justice.

Another suspect, Jesus Austerio alias Nino, 18, was arrested by Quezon City police on Thursday.

Austerio, a tricycle driver and a resident of Luzon Avenue in Barangay Old Balara, was found with a Nokia 3310 cellphone, P15,000, jewelry, and a bloodstained backpack containing bloodstained clothes.

North Cemetery officials face MMDA investigation

By Leila B. Salaverria

OFFICIALS of the North Cemetery face investigation by the Metro Manila Development Authority after an unregistered tow truck was caught bringing a towed vehicle there, according to Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel De Dios.

He said the MMDA has caught 12 illegal tow trucks in two days and discovered that one of these trucks was virtually using the cemetery as an impounding area.

"It was operating right under (the cemetery officials') noses," Vergel De Dios said.

He said the owners of the tow trucks no longer has a chance at being accredited by the MMDA. He said the tow trucks are as good as immobilized.

"They've constantly defied us and have done illegal acts, and then we'd legalize them? We can't do that," Vergel De Dios said.

He said the MMDA has not been remiss in reminding the towing companies to register with the MMDA, as required by the Metro Manila Council towing ordinance passed last year.

Vergel De Dios said it's not enough for the companies to register with the local government units.

Illegal towing operations which register are not fined, so they "have no excuse not to register," he said.

The ordinance aims to curb fly-by-night towing operations by requiring the towing companies to report to the MMDA's 136 number the plate number and offense of every vehicle they would tow. This would enable the owner of the towed vehicle to file complaints, if he has any, or locate his vehicle by calling the 136 number.

Binay wants real score on death after row of traffic enforcer

By Leila B. Salaverria

MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay has stepped into the case of traffic enforcer Johnny Lao, who died after suffering a hypertension attack when a motorist pointed a gun at him during a traffic altercation.

Lao, 27, was a traffic enforcer of a Makati Public Safety Department. He was in a coma for two days before he passed away.

Binay yesterday assured Lao's family that he would personally look into the case.

Lao's family had filed a resolution with the prosecutor's office asking that the charge against suspect Andresito A. Aguila be upgraded to homicide.

"I hope that the victim, who died in the line of duty, will get speedy justice against this rude motorist," Binay said in a statement.

BINAY

The statement also said that the incident should serve as a lesson to motorists.

Aguila, 35, a businessman, was slapped with charges of Threats and Resistance and Disobedience to a Person of Authority after he figured in the traffic altercation with Lao.

Investigation showed that Lao and Mapsa traffic enforcer Hermogenes Tagudeña were directing traffic along Gil Puyat Avenue on Jan. 6 when Lao stopped Aguila's Range Rover.

Angered by Lao's action, Aguila confronted the traffic enforcer. The two began arguing, and not long after, Aguila pulled out a gun and pointed it at Lao.

Tagudeña, who witnessed the incident, radioed for backup.

As Aguila was about to be taken to the police station, he backed his car and hit Ronaldo Aquino, who was on a motorcycle, the investigation showed.

Aquino was taken to a hospital for treatment.

Policemen who went to the scene then took Aguila to a police precinct where Tagudeña noticed that Lao was turning pale as he spoke with a field inspector.

Lao was rushed to the Makati Medical Center where he went into a coma before dying.

Doctors said Lao died of hypertension and intra-cerebral bleeding.

Store manager mauled, robbed by 'MMDA men'

By Tina Santos

A STORE manager has filed a complaint with police against four alleged personnel of the Metro Manila Development Authority for robbing and mauling him in Caloocan City on Thursday.

Police said Charles Go Li, 21, a resident of Le Mariche Sudivision on E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City and manager of Mitsuwa International Group Corp. in Edsa, Caloocan City, was still nursing the bruises and wounds he suffered when he filed his complaint against the suspects at the Caloocan Police Station Intelligence and Investigation Division (SIID).

The suspects have yet to be identified.

Investigation showed that at about 11 a.m., the four suspects who were in MMDA uniforms, introduced themselves as members of the agency's sidewalk clearing operations and entered the appliance store where Li works.

Li told police the four confronted him about the appliances that were on the sidewalk in front of the store.

He said he politely explained to the suspects that the appliances were on the sidewalk for pick up by a delivery van.

But the suspects ignored Li's explanation and insisted that the appliances be immediately removed from the sidewalk, the store manager said.

Li said the suspects forcibly entered his office and took the appliances, including a karaoke and other items.

He said that the suspects mauled him when he tried to stop them from taking the appliances.

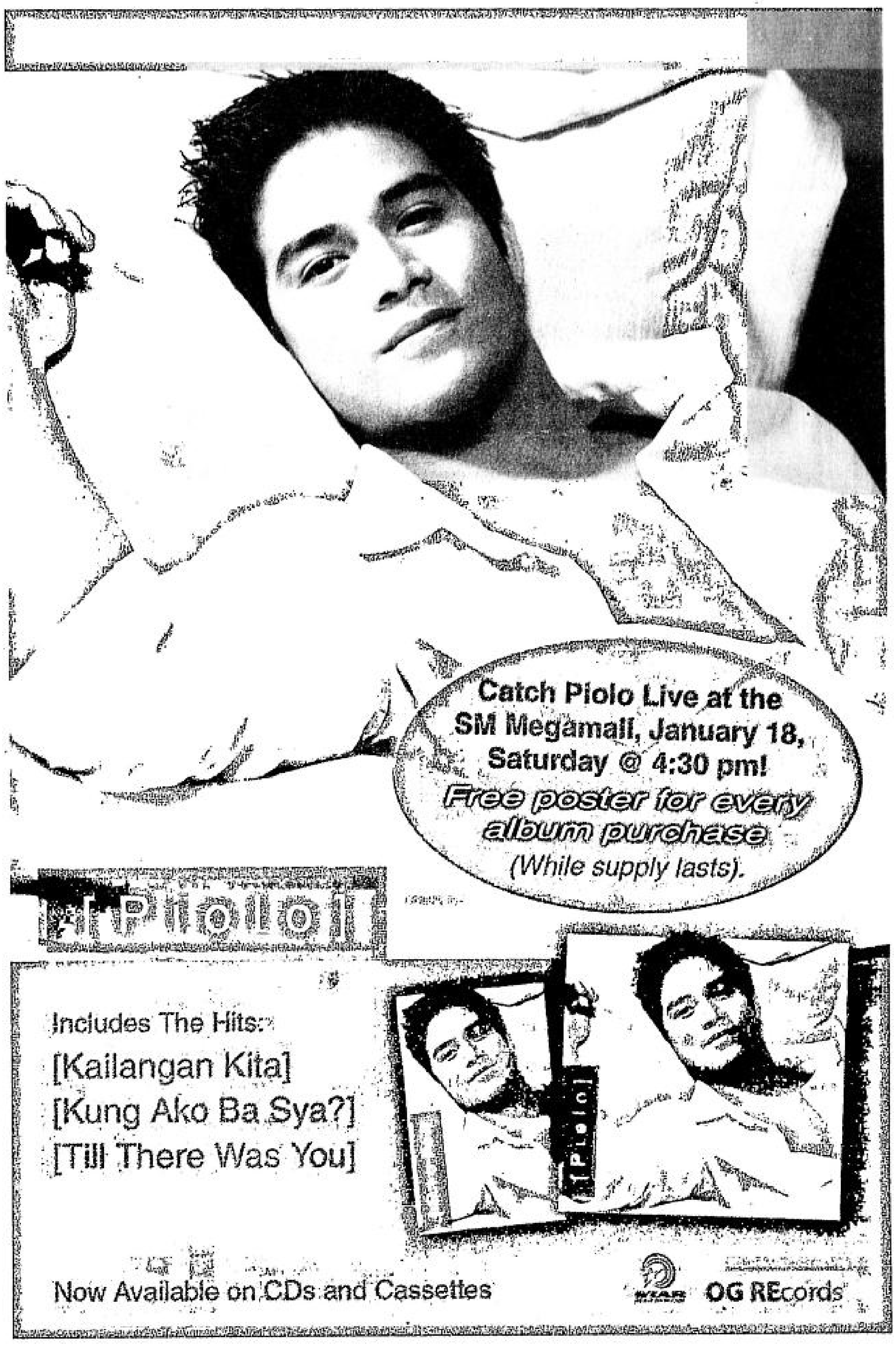
Police said they are now trying to determine the identities of the suspects and if they are really personnel of the MMDA.

Andrade interment today at Eternal Gardens

ROSARIO Punzalan Andrade, former secretary to the general manager of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, will be buried today at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park at Baesa, Quezon City after a 10 a.m. holy Mass at the Funeraria Paz on Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Mrs. Andrade, widow of the late Manuel O. Andrade, an educator-turned-PCSO supervisor, and mother of top PCSO sales agent Fred Andrade, hails from Aklan province.

She is survived by children Fred and Mila, Melchor and Ching Ching, and Danny; grandchildren Pi and Ritchie, Tonton, Eman; and, great grandchild Alleah Patricia.



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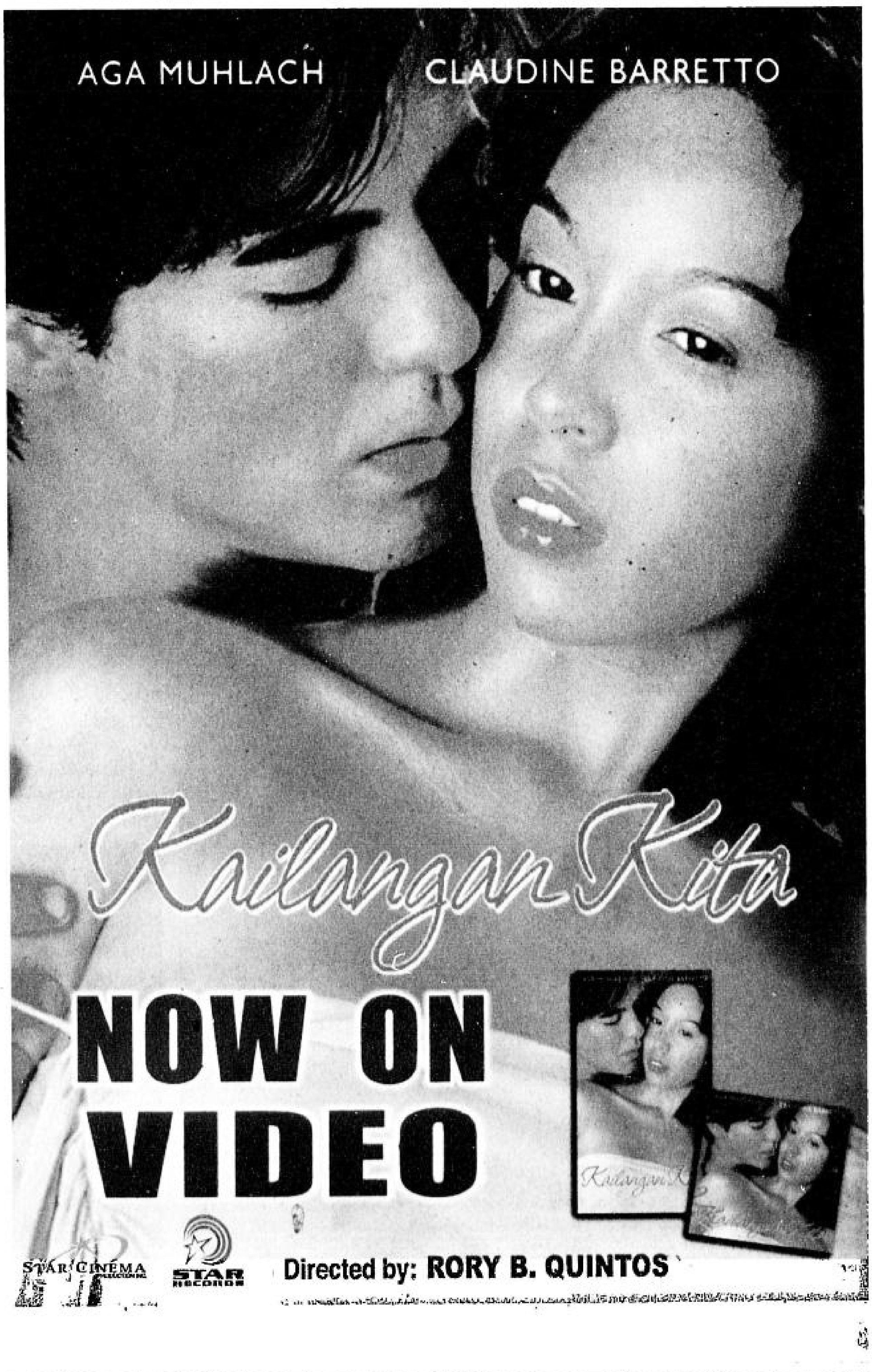

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Nowhere to go in muddy Malabon

By Tina Santos

A RESETTLEMENT area promised them by the chief city executive of Malabon turned out to be a muddy, unproductive fishpond.

After discovering the abomination, some 2500 urban poor families in four barangays of Malabon City who will be affected by the Manila-Clark (North Metro) Rapid Railway project of the national government are up in arms against Mayor Amado Vicencio.

These families have accused Vicencio of misleading them after they found out that the proposed resettlement site (for them) is a 12.5-hectare unproductive fishpond.

The residents in barangays Tugatog, Potrero, Acacia and Tinajeros are scheduled to be relocated to the site in Barangay Tanza in Navotas as their shanties built along the railways are set to be demolished in the next three months.

But during an ocular visit at the proposed relocation site, the residents, together with their urban poor leaders, were surprised and dismayed at what they saw.

The property remains a wide expanse of heavily silted brackish water where the muddy bottom has yet to be reclaimed from the sea.

"What does the mayor expect? If ever, we have to dive two-meter deep to get to our land. This is all water, we have nowhere to go," the urban poor leaders chorused.

"Where does he expect us to build our homes?, " said the other residents, adding that with what they had seen, they were even more convinced that Vicencio and other local officials have been fooling them all along.

Clarita Eneria, eight-year president of the urban poor group Kapit Kamay Residents' Association of Barangay Potrero-Tinajeros, accompanied by other representatives of prospective relocatees, opposition councilors and reporters, saw for herself the proposed resettlement site, where her family and some 400 others in her care had earlier hoped to build their homes after living "along the riles" for many years.

Eneria said Vicencio had allegedly boasted during their previous meetings that the Tanza resettlement site has been "40-percent land-filled."

The ocular visit proved otherwise. The resettlement was actually a 12.5-hectare fishpond with an average depth of 2 meters and hemmed in by 2-meter high cracked and crumbling meter-wide earthen dikes.

Dredging

This finding was supported by the dredger operator hired by the fishpond owner, Jun-Jun Fishing Corp.

Miguel Cielo, 29, dredger operator of contractor RFS contracted by alleged fishpond-owner Mario Sochi, said they only started dredging the Malabon-Navotas River on Dec. 10, 2002 and pipe-pumped only "burak" (mud) into the 12.5 hectare fishpond in Siochi's attempt to fill, reclaim and make his property habitable by April.

"It will take a miracle. It's really impossible. At the rate we're going (eight hours of dredging daily) it will take years before we could fill this up. And the filling materials, which is all mud, that we're getting from the river would not be enough," Cielo explained in Filipino.

He said the machine was only dredging mud through the 1-foot diameter puny pipe.

The residents likewise appealed to the national government to help them look for an alternative relocation site.

"The present land-filling definitely cannot be finished until our scheduled demolition. We hope our national government would heed our pleas because our local government officials seem to be ignoring us," they said.

A female resident, who settled in the area in 1972 and built her house on top of the dike, said it will take hundreds of 20-foot poles sunk into the mud to enable anyone to build a stable house in the water.

It will take a miracle to make the watery relocation area dry and habitable

MALABON Mayor Amado Vicencio

Aside from the residents' complaint, opposition councilors alleged that the acquisition of the same property has been made by city officials under questionable circumstances.

Charges

The opposition bloc at the city council, which includes councilors Ma. Luisa Roque-Villaroel, Edilberto Torres and Payapa Ona, had earlier accused Vicencio of dishonesty, abuse of authority, misconduct in office and gross negligence in a complaint filed before the Office of the President in relation to the acquisition of the contrqversial relocation site.

The Malabon City government had agreed to buy the property of Jun-Jun Fishing Corp (JFC), and had in fact paid JFC P12.6 million as down payment eight months ago in April 30, 2002.

The Navotas government, meanwhile, had earlier acquired an adjacent property owned by JFC bought at a much lower price of P320 per square meter, almost half the P700 per square meter that the city of Malabon has offered to buy the neighboring property. This, the opposition councilors said, were among the other irregularities they discovered along the way, which prompted them to demand an explanation from Vicencio and the city council majority.

In a memorandum of agreement signed in April 2 last year, Siochi agreed to develop the land "into good habitable condition within six months, effectively from April 29 to October 28, 2002. Before the agreed filling-up period expired, the city council granted a request by Siochi for an extension of another 90 days (ending Jan. 28, 2003) to fill up the property.

"Obviously, based on what we actually saw, JFC has so far failed to deliver on its commitment to fill up the total land area to the level of the dike, Torres said, adding that it would take some 10 to 15 years for the reclaimed or land-filled area to "settle down" and be safe to live in.

"This area is basically unsafe and obviously pose danger to life and limb of the prospective settlers. The property to this day, remains a water world," Torres said.

On the other hand, Vicencio accused Torres and company of delaying a legitimate project that would benefit the poor. The mayor said there was nothing irregular in the purchase of the property which, in fact, "had the approval of the city council."

Vicencio was supposed to reply yesterday to an order of the Office of the President issued by deputy executive secretary Arthur Autea asking him to file his verified answer to the opposition councilors' charges.

But Vicencio could not be immediately reached for comment.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	LASTIKMAN
Ali 2	KERIDA
Ali 3	HALF PAST DEAD
Ali 4	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 5	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 6	HEAVEN
Ali 7	MANO PO
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	HALF PAST DEAD
Farmers 2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JAN 20, 22, 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003
FEB 3 & 5	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
FEB 15	ABBA TRIBUTE
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN. 18	3 PM / 5 PM
JAN. 19	3 PM / 5 PM
JAN 21	10 AM / 3 PM

VACC wants Alcatraz-like prison for drug lords

By Jerome Aning

AN ANTI-CRIME group wants suspected drug lords and traffickers to be detained in an Alcatraz-like facility on El Fraile Island off Cavite.

Members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption made this proposal to stem what they call the rising tide of narcopolitics.

Dante Jimenez, VACC founding chair, said the detention island would ensure maximum security detention for arrested drug kingpins.

"Drug traffickers should be shut out and isolated from society, and (they must) remain incommunicado so that they could not continue their illicit activities," he said in a letter to Malacañang last week.

Jimenez said the suspects should not be allowed to use cell phones, while visitation rights must be limited.

The VACC also wants military personnel employed full-time in the anti-drug drive.

"With a growing number of (policemen) being implicated in drug cases, there is now a widely negative perception of the ability of the police to effectively carry out its (anti-drug) mission," Jimenez said.

The anti-crime crusader also wants the government to establish more criminal courts whose sole purpose would be to try drug-related cases.

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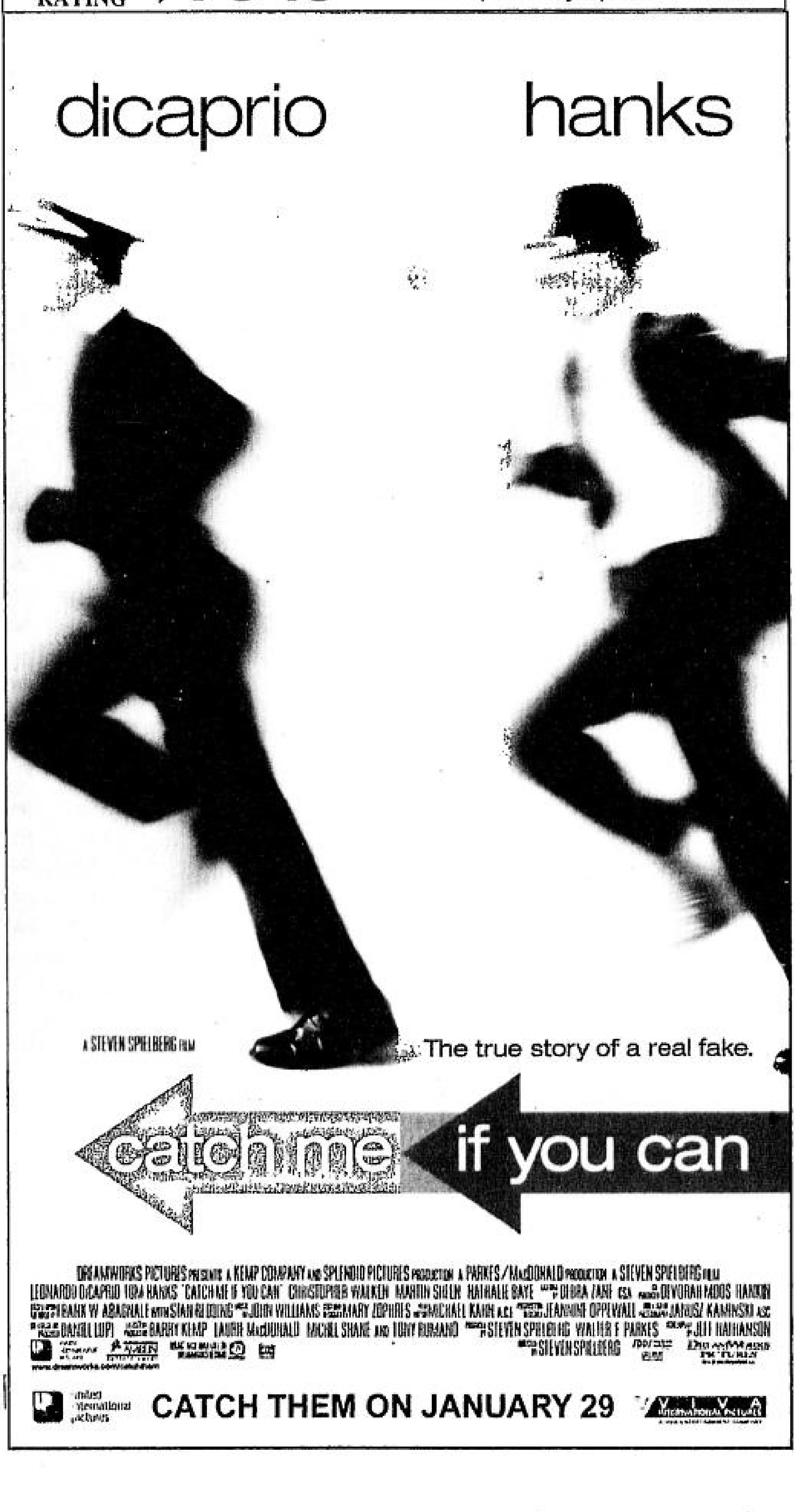

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3-corner fight looms for MMDA's top post

By Carlito Pablo

A THREE-WAY contest looms for the chairmanship of the Metro Manila Development Authority should Bayani Fernando, concurrent acting secretary for public works, decide to give up the MMDA.

BUNYE

LIM

MALONZO

A Malacañang official, who asked not to be named, said that the camp of former President Corazon Aquino has mounted a "strong lobby" for former Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim.

The same official also said that Metro Manila mayors are pushing for their colleague, Caloocan City Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo.

The third candidate is Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, whom the official said is being held as a "reserve" appointee by the Palace.

"All three are capable appointees, but it would all depend on Fernando's decision," the source said.

Fernando took over the Department of Public Works and Highways as acting secretary last Wednesday, replacing Simeon Datumanong, who has been designated as justice secretary.

Fernando remains MMDA chair in concurrent capacity, but he may choose to give it up should he decide to become full-time DPWH secretary.

"The camp of the former president (Aquino) is making a strong lobby for Fred Lim," the source said.

Mrs. Aquino has supported Lim in his failed presidential candidacy in 1998, and the two have been close through the years.

Lim has earned the monicker "Dirty Harry" for his strong arm tactics as a local executive and law enforcer.

Malonzo, for his part, is closely identified with President Macapagal-Arroyo, having been, among others, the few officials who openly defied then President Joseph Estrada.

"Malonzo has the solid backing of Metro Manila mayors," the source said.

Bunye is no stranger to the MMDA.

As then mayor of Muntinlupa, he headed the agency for three years, from 1991 to 1994.

Bunye was appointed press secretary in July 2002 and was recently designated as President Macapagal's spokesperson.

"Secretary Bunye would gladly go back to the MMDA if told so by the President," the source said.

Fernando wants to hold on to both the MMDA and DPWH, but it has been said that this is legally untenable.

The DPWH post was earlier offered by Malacañang to opposition Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, who turned it down.

METROBRIEFS

Robbery on Edsa

POLICE are hunting down a pair of hold-up men who robbed passengers of an air-conditioned bus on Thursday in Caloocan City. Caloocan City Police Station Intelligence and Investigation Division chief Supt. Dionicio Borromeo said the suspects robbed the northbound passenger bus Jell Transport (PXN-310), driven by Norberto Panibe, 32, of Sta. Maria, Bulacan, at around 4 p.m. Bus conductor Fernando Imperial told police that the suspects pulled out a .38-caliber revolver and a knife and announced the heist when the bus reached Muñoz in Quezon City. Upon reaching Bagong Barrio, Caloocan City, the suspects got off the bus and escaped with the loot. *Tina Santos*

Roundup in Monumento

POLICE continue to round up suspected prostitutes at the Ever Gotesco Grand Central Mall in Monumento, Caloocan City. A 17-year-old girl, four other women and two male pimps were caught in an entrapment at around 4:45 p.m. on Thursday, according to Insp. Romeo Onte of the Caloocan Police Station Intelligence Branch. Onte said a plainclothesman posed as a customer, approached one of the suspects inside the Grand Central Mall and talked to one of the male pimps. As soon as they came to an agreement, the police pounced in and arrested Jocelyn Baldonato, 29, Cel Diaz, 22, Rosemarie Sanches, 22, Rose Villaraz, 18, Leo Villanueva, 43, Perfecto Pablo, 21, and the 17-year-old girl. Dozens of suspected prostitutes have been frequenting the Gotesco mall on Rizal Avenue in Caloocan, luring male customers. *Tina Santos*

Mauling in Caloocan

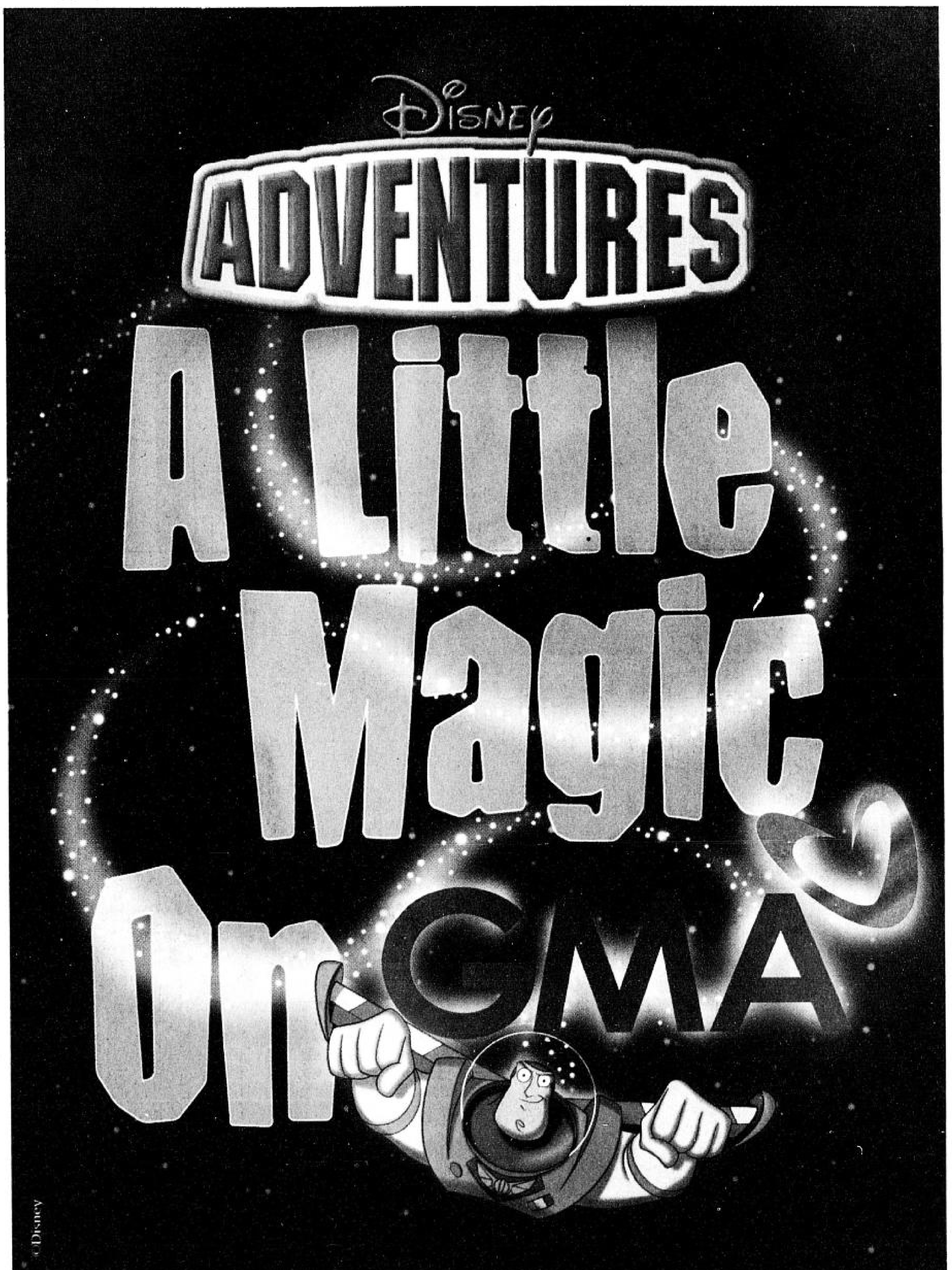
CHINESE-FILIPINO businessman Charles Go Li, 21, has accused four Metro Manila Development Authority personnel of robbing and attacking him in Caloocan City on Thursday. Police said Li, a resident of Quezon City and manager of Mitsuwa International Group Corporation on Edsa in Caloocan, was still nursing the bruises he received from the suspects when he went to the Caloocan Police Station Intelligence and Investigation Division to file a complaint. Li said the four suspects, all clad in MMDA uniform, went to his appliance store at around 11 a.m., introduced themselves as members of the agency's anti-sidewalk clearing operations team, and asked the victim about the appliances that were on display in front of the store and on the sidewalk. Li said he politely explained to the suspects that the appliances were there to be picked up by a delivery van. But the suspects instead got furious, insisted that the appliances be immmediately removed and and took the products, including a karaoke set. Not contented, the four suspects even mauled the victim when he tried to stop them, police said. *Tina Santos*

Stabbing in Malate

HOUSEMAID Charing Angaw, 68, had seven stabbed wounds, all in her head, when lawmen found her body in Malate, Manila Wednesday morning. Her skirt was also lifted up to her waist, leading police to suspect that she might have been raped when her employer's home was robbed. Angaw, 68, who worked for Dr. Paulino Tan at his house on Leon Guinto Street, Malate, was already dead when family driver Baltazar Cabindol found her at about 8 a.m. Wednesday, said Detective Virgo Villareal. "There were no signs of forcible entry in the house but the cabinets, attache cases, and drawers were all in disarray," Villareal said. The culprits remain unidentified and the police are also in the dark about the amount of the stolen valuables, he added. *Philip Tubeza*

Rape conviction in Pasig

CONVICTED rapist Julius Ambucal on Thursday narrowly escaped the death penalty after government prosecutors allegedly failed to file in the complaint sheet containing pertinent details that would have qualified him as a candidate for lethal injection. In sentencing Ambucal to life imprisonment, Pasig City Regional Trial Court branch 262 Judge Isagani Geronimo said the prosecution's failure to "specifically allege the qualifying circumstance that the victim was raped in full view of her brother," only qualifies the accused to be sentenced with a lesser penalty. Aside from the prison term, Geronimo ordered Ambucal to pay his victim P100,000 in moral and civil damages. Records showed that Ambucal had been raping his seven-year-old neighbor for four months, until he was caught on Feb. 10, 1998 by another neighbor. Ambucal denied the allegations and presented an alibi which the court rejected. *Nelson Flores*



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METRO
Editor Louie C. Camino

Quezon official laments rejection of MMDA waste facility proposal

LUCENA CITY—A senior member of the Quezon Sangguniang Panlalawigan lamented the rejection of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) multi-billion-peso garbage landfill project in the province, blaming the strong lobby allegedly waged by Metro Manila local executives.

"The Metro Manila mayors do not want to lose the multi-million monthly payola money from garbage hauling contractors," board member Eladio Pasamba, chair of the council's committee on environment and natural resources, told the INQUIRER. "They spend so much money to misinform the people of Quezon and its officials on the true merits of the landfill project."

When asked where he got the information, Pasamba, a lawyer and certified public accountant who once held office in Manila, said he has sources among "Metro Manila's big-time press relation practitioners."

Pasamba said "the people and Quezon officials should have seriously studied the project first."

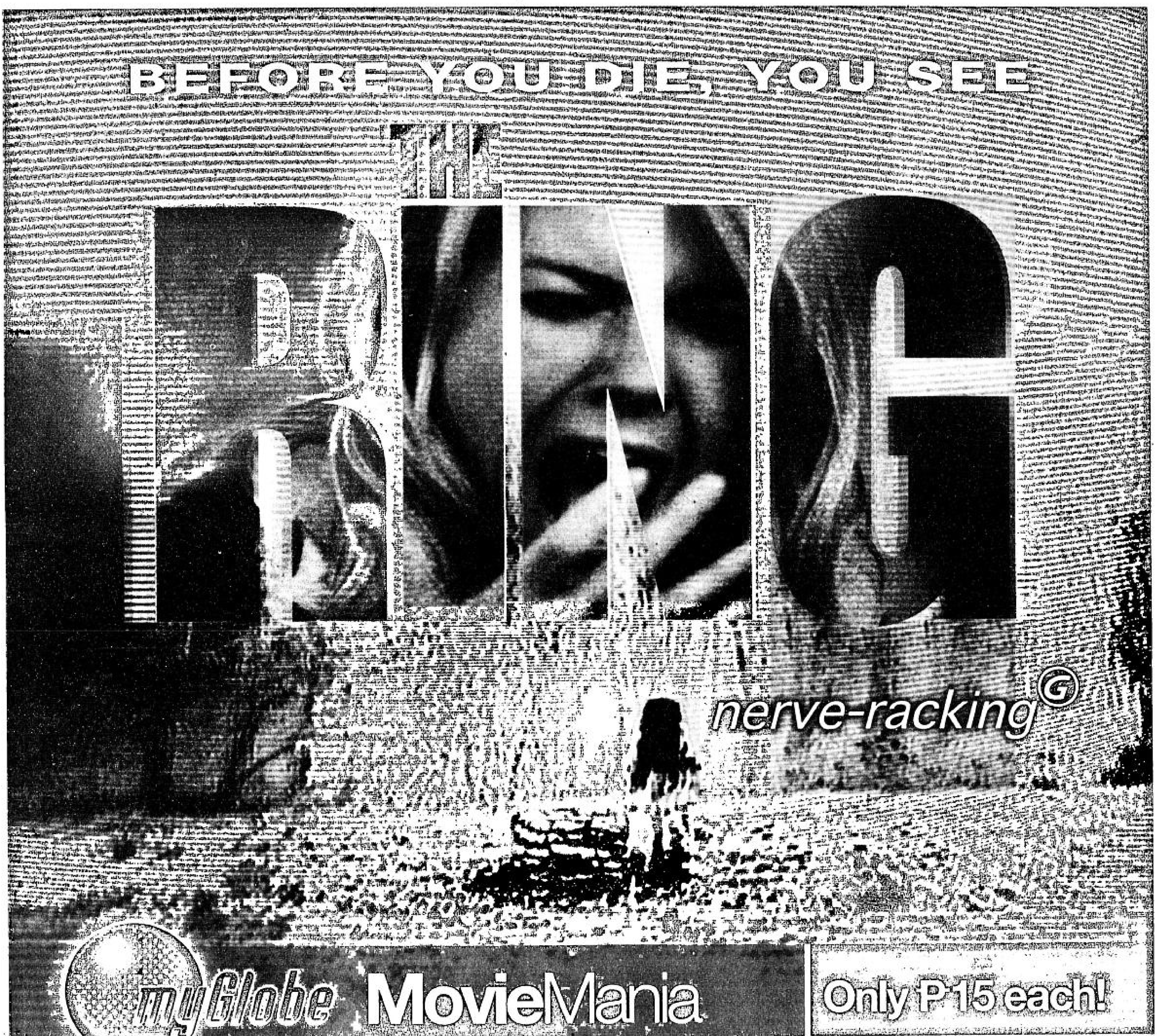
"The projected P438 million that will be derived annually from the project will bring tremendous benefits not only to the province but also to the host barangays," he said. "It's good money for school buildings, books and farm-to-market roads, and lots of funding for other badly needed government projects."

Pasamba made it clear that the proposed P1.5-billion garbage facility in the province is now dead.

"After the Sangguniang Panlalawigan has officially decided against the project, I'm afraid we could no longer resurrect it anymore," he stressed.

"We're legislators here and not the popular sex bomb girls who can easily shift from "laban" to "bawi." Reviving the issue at this point is no longer possible. I'll be the first one to contest any effort towards that direction," he said.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



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Clean Air Act implementation faces delay

MACAPAGAL

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG is planning to defer the implementation of the Clean Air Act if diesel prices shoot up specially in view of a looming war in the Middle East, a move that could put operators of emission testing centers in limbo.

An INQUIRER source said the President had sent a memorandum to the Department of Transportation and Communication and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to suspend the mandatory emission testing for vehicle registration if diesel prices shoot up beyond P15.50 per liter from its current level of P15.10.

Transportation groups, the main users of diesel, have led the clamor for the suspension of the Clean Air Act—which took effect at the start of this year—due to the high costs that the public utility operators and drivers would incur to comply with the emission tests.

The suspension, which has become highly probable considering Washington's determination to attack Iraq within the next few months, is feared to put in financial jeopardy the 78 Motor Vehicle Private Emission Testing Centers (MV-PETCs) that the Department of Trade and Industry has so far allowed to participate in the new and potent business.

A source said that operators have relayed their concern on the status of the Clean Air Act to the DTI, which wanted to push through the emission tests as scheduled.

The MV-PETC operators are mostly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that were enticed by the DTI to go into the business because of the attractive returns.

In a previous statement, Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said the MV-PETCs were a "highly lucrative" business that could earn P3.75 million a year for each lane (a test center could have up 7 lanes each) based on P200 to P300 in fees per test and an estimated 50 vehicles a day.

Roxas said that investors could recover their investments in just a year. "Given this highly promising rate of return, a PETC is a very viable option for those who want to venture into entrepreneurial endeavors," Roxas said.

Roxas said the DTI has estimated that the PETC industry would yield a total of P667.5 million to the 78 MV-PETC operators in their first year of operations. To further attract more SMEs into the business, the DTI is currently drawing up a financing package that help them bankroll the minimum P1.5 million start-up capital for the venture.

Customs cracks down on bonded warehouses

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BUREAU of Customs has shut down 320 bonded warehouses throughout the country that its officials believed were being used by unscrupulous traders to smuggle goods into the country and evade taxes.

Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo said he would phase out the common bonded trading warehouses and would allow only industry-specific warehouses to operate.

Bernardo said the 320 facilities were ordered closed since these have not been actively operating in the last 12 months. Despite being inactive, the Customs chief suspected that these warehouses were being used to smuggle goods into the country.

"Of the 320, 168 are classified as public, 48 are manufacturing, 39 are garments, and six are common," Bernardo said.

A little less than 1,000 bonded warehouses operate all over the country. These facilities were put up to facilitate the tax- and duty-free importation of exporters.

Strictly speaking, only raw materials that would be eventually reexported should pass through bonded warehouses.

But through the years, the system had been corrupted such that even finished goods were allowed to use the bonded warehouses.

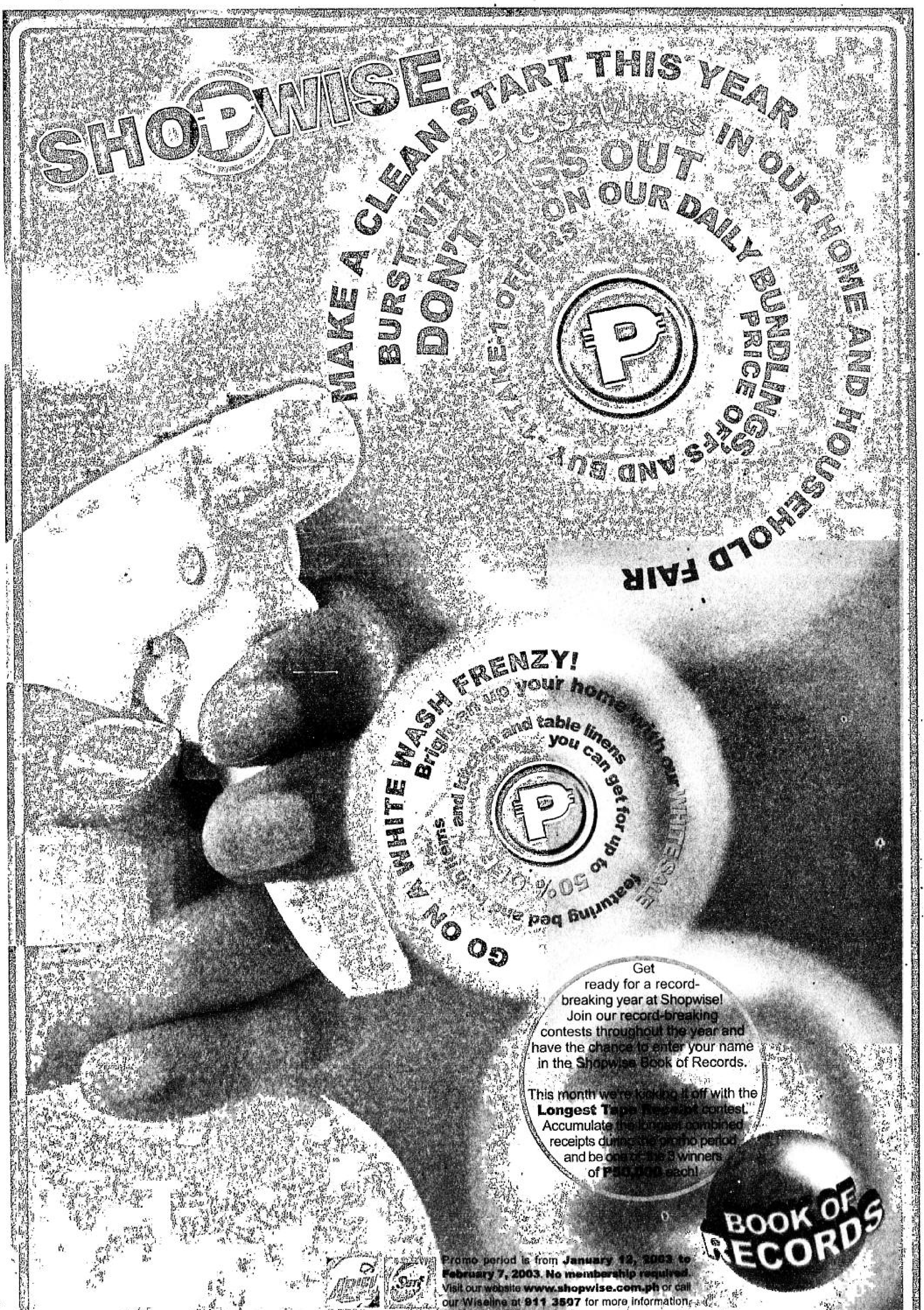
Oil firms defer price increases

THE BIG Three oil firms said they were still in a wait-and-see mode after new players TotalFinaElf Philippines and Eastern Petroleum Corp. announced on Thursday price increases of 60 centavos per liter for gasoline and 40-42 centavos for diesel and kerosene.

Virginia Ruivivar, corporate communications manager of Petron Corp., said the oil giant was putting off a decision on whether to follow suit on Monday.

Officials of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex (Philippines) also have not decided on the matter.

Total's price hikes took effect midnight of Friday while that of Eastern were reflected in pump prices at 6 a.m. yesterday morning. *R. W. Domingo*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Per DTI-

Movie dick

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

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Movie people do not like the 10-percent VAT on "professionals" which the Department of Finance has no choice but to implement this year.

For the information of the movie stars, the value-added tax is an old imposition. It has burdened the rest of us for the past 16 years or so.

Through the hard work of influential groups in broadcast media, the government only deferred the VAT on the so-called professionals.

This year the deferment ends. If Finance Secretary Jose Isidro "the Whiz" Camacho does not enforce it, he can go to jail. This will make the movie people happy.

* * *

BUT the Whiz will do well to consider what the movie people are capable of doing. They will do anything to stop him from deducting the VAT from their pay. Every Tom, Dick and Harry in the movies are even ready to march in the streets.

I really don't know how the "beautiful people" hold protest rallies, particularly Ara, Ruffa Mae and Joyce.

But all you guys, please, whatever you do, all you beasts out there, just please avoid staring at anything below the neck, which means chest and other sensitive parts.

Anyway, as I said, the Whiz must be careful. Movie people are known to have political connections.

Look, just the other day, they already trooped to the office of Sen. Robert Barbers, who even entertained them.

The good senator, you see, heads the Senate committee on entertainment. This may mean all sorts of things, but it does not mean that Barbers is the senator in charge of provocative dancing or anything greatly entertaining to us men like that.

* * *

WITH his sons also in politics, although one of them is simply forcing his way into the Philippine Tourism Authority, Barbers has no time for GROs and sweet things like those.

He works hard as head of the Senate committee which takes care of the interest of movie stars, but it does not mean he

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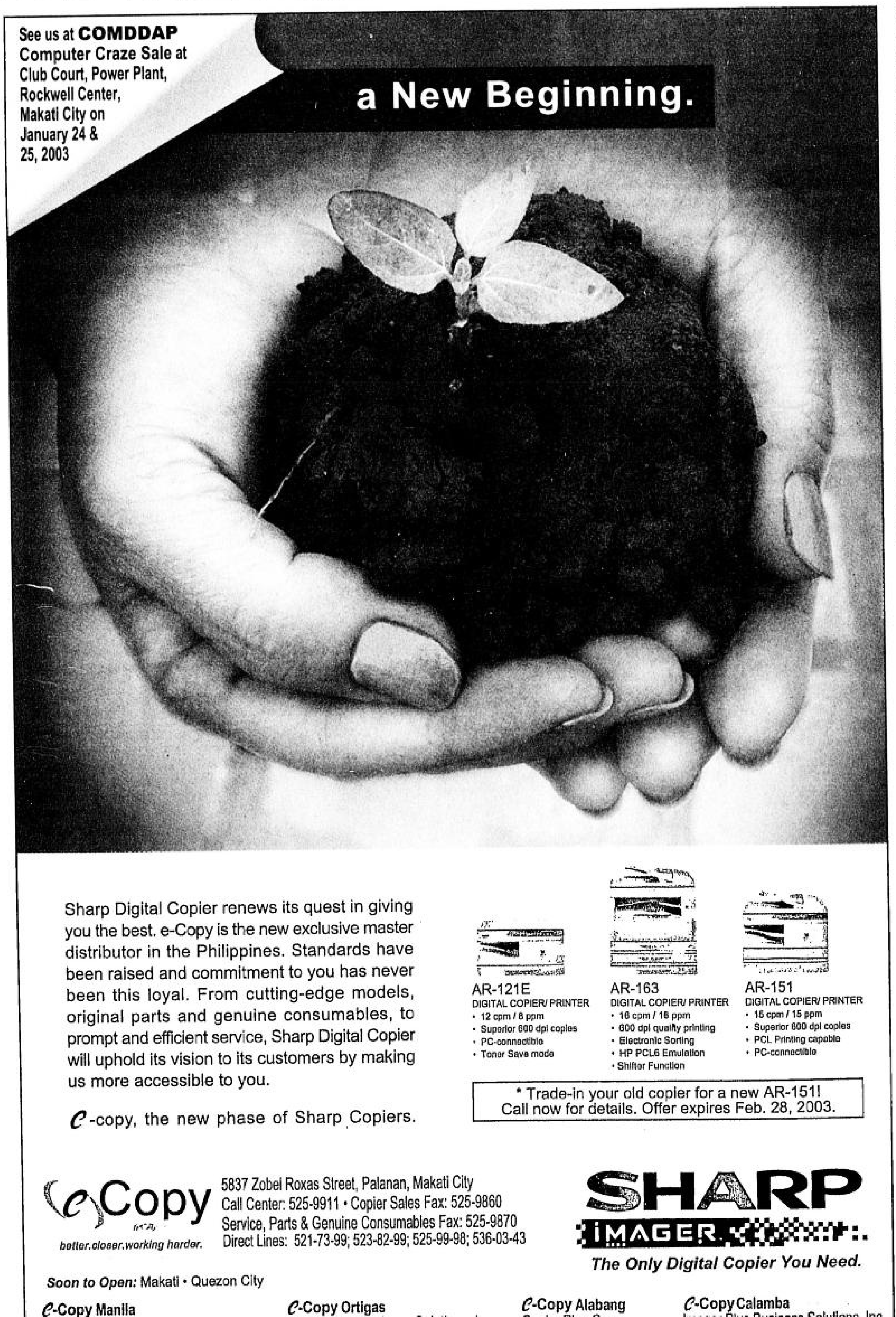

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China Banking Corp.	630	640	630	640	9,960
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	27.5	28	27	27	132,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	31	30.5	31	49,400
Philippine National Bank	26	27	26	26	7,300
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	9.7	9.8	9.7	9.8	28,000
Security Bank Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	8,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	3,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	40,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	100,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1190	1250	1190	1245	370
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1010	1030	1010	1030	3,760
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COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	4,120,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	520	525	510	525	12,630
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	1,800,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.015	0.017	0.015	0.017	1,780,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	400,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	330	332.5	322.5	325	138,900
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	6,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.5	9.6	9.2	9.2	204,000
Manila Electric Co. B	13	13.25	12.75	13	1,460,200
Petron Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.6	2,791,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	15,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	1,470,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.66	1.7	1.66	1.7	3,168,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	557,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	90,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	50,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.14	2.16	2.14	2.16	20,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	248,900
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.71	1,130,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	28,200
San Miguel Corp. B	64.5	64.5	64	64.5	201,100
Universal Robina Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	54,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.45	4.5	4.45	4.5	2,693,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	80,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.165	3,160,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	1,020,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	1	1	1	1	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	10	10	9.9	9.9	568,000
Ionics Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.76	0.76	1,320,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	267,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.6	0.61	3,500,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	110,000
Music Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	500,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	20,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	170,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12	12.75	12	12.5	227,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	430,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	300,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & S WARRANT					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	14.25	14.25	14	14	10,259,800
Jollibee Warrants	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.2	22,793,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	400,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.13	0.145	0.13	0.145	1,150,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.98	1.02	0.98	0.99	4,810,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,000,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	51,000
SM Development Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	24,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	5,073,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	81,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.23	3,180,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	670,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	150,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	2,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	6,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	18,000,000

DISCLOSURES

VITARICH Corp. said its president Armando Escobar had filed his leave of absence in preparation for his resignation. Rogelio Sarmiento, the company chair, will act as president in concurrent capacity.

* * *

F & J Prince Holding Corp. announced the appointment of Roman Pacia Jr. as compliance officer.

* * *

EXPORT & Industry Bank, in response to requests from other stockholders of the bank for the release to them of the new stock certificates of the bank, authorized the release of the certificates of the remaining common shares.

* * *

THE BOARD of William, Gothong and Aboitiz Inc. has set Jan. 30 as the record date for stockholders and companies that are eligible to redeem 6 out of every 10 outstanding redeemable preferred shares at P6.67 per share. Partial redemption will be implemented starting Feb. 11. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Jan. 17, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.941620	1.000000	53.502000
Japan	Yen	0.007994	0.008490	0.454200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.517137	1.611200	86.202400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.120740	0.128226	6.860300
Switzerland	Franc	0.685213	0.727696	38.933200
Canada	Dollar	0.613473	0.651508	34.857000
Singapore	Dollar	0.543817	0.577534	30.899200
Australia	Dollar	0.552269	0.586510	31.379500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.497731	2.652590	141.918900
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.251092	0.266660	14.266800
Brunei	Dollar	0.542251	0.575871	30.810300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000106	0.000113	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022062	0.023430	1.253600
UAE	Dirham	0.256377	0.272272	14.567100
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.062000	56.819100
ArgentinaPeso	0.289729	0.307692	16.462100	
Brazil	REAL	0.285945	0.303674	16.247200
Denmark	Kroner	0.134554	0.142896	7.645200
India	Rupee	0.019674	0.020894	1.117900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.247828	0.263193	14.081400
Mexico	New Peso	0.089423	0.094967	5.080900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.510917	0.542594	29.029900
Norway	Kroner	0.137523	0.146049	7.813800
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016221	0.017227	0.921700
South Africa	Rand	0.107079	0.113718	6.084100
Korea	Won	0.000807	0.000857	0.045900
Sweden	Kroner	0.108941	0.115695	6.189900
Syria	Pound	0.018283	0.019417	1.038800
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.027421	0.029121	1.558000
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000544	0.000578	0.030900

Stocks end 7 points up

SHARES ended close to a new year high yesterday as bargain hunters stepped back into the market following a brief correction on Thursday, traders said.

The main index ended up 7.15 points, or 0.67 percent, at 1,081.60 points, after briefly touching a new year high of 1,084.05 points during the session.

Over the week, the index rose 2.2 percent.

Turnover reached P487.92 million from P357.64 million on Thursday. Advancers led decliners 29 to 13 with 36 stocks unchanged.

"There was a sharp drop in prices in our market in the second half of last year and some locals have decided to accumulate," said Efren Cruz, President of Mutual Fund Management Co. of the Philippines.

He added however that most foreign investors were still shying away from Philippine stocks, even as the drop in prices had put the market's P/E valuation in line with its neighbors.

"It's just under 14 times (prospective 2003 earnings) which is more or less in line with Thailand and Indonesia," he said adding that should help entice foreign investors back over time.

Reuters

DTI to blacklist unreliable exporters

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is toughening up on delinquent export companies that have tarnished the Philippines' image among foreign buyers as a dependable supplier.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said: "The unresolved complaints from foreign buyers greatly affect the Philippines' image as a reliable source of commodities and products."

Export firms that have been found culpable by the Export Trade Complaints Committee (ETCC) of misdeeds such as non-payment of deliveries, defaults on paid orders, failure to comply with buyer specifications, and undue cancellation of orders would be placed on a blacklist.

These errant firms would be banned from getting any assistance from the DTI and its agencies such as availing themselves of fiscal incentives and joining government-sponsored local and foreign trade fairs and exhibitions.

Roxas said the Credit Information Bureau Inc. (CIBI), a member of the inter-agency ETCC, could issue a negative rating on a guilty company's credit standing.

The ETCC reviewed a total of 24 cases last year involving disputes between Philippine exporters and their foreign buyers with most of the cases resolved amicably between both parties.

Breaktime

From page B2

provides the entertainment himself.

Moreover, as an industry group, movie stars are only the cousins of dancers, GROs, and other pleasure providers.

Still, the movie people only went to see Barbers to ask him if he could please do them a favor by exempting them from the VAT. That's all. So what's wrong with that?

Everybody tries to look for a *padrino*. Maybe the movie people found a padrino in Barbers. Still, nobody actually knows if he promised them anything.

He probably just humored them. For if Barbers works on their request, I don't think the other professionals will like it. He is playing favorites.

The public will start to think that, at the rate Barbers is getting involved with movie people, he may become the first politician to turn actor.

* * *

NOW Barbers may have the talent, but if he grants the movie stars their wish, he will surely hear it from the lawyers and the doctors.

Never mind the other "professionals," such as the gun-for-hires in Cavite and the DIs in Makati, the ex-cop turned politico will know how to deal with those characters.

But then again, if he should give a big favor to one group, he should give a big favor to all the professionals. This brings about a little problem.

If he gives a big favor to all professionals, where will it all end? Hopefully, we can all get a tax break like the professionals.

But it is close to impossible. Me, I can just tell Barbers, go ahead, boss, be our guest. Do what you have to do for the movie people and never mind us, ordinary taxpayers.

'What can we mere mortals do? All those beautiful people do not only LOOK like they are having more fun than we. They are actually having more fun.

* * *

BESIDES, Barbers has no choice. He must humor the movie people. Displeased by Barbers or any member of the Senate, they can actually pose a threat to the nation.

I think that the issue on the VAT exemption for movie people should be treated with a sense of the highest level of national emergency.

Movie stars are a clear and present danger to national security. They can all run in the next elections, and then we have a Senate filled with movie stars.

The Senate, as we all know by now, since nothing is happening to us, with all those bills pending, is already a receptacle for celebrities.

Take your bow—Loren, Noli, Kiko, Jawo, Nardong Putik, Mr. Vilm...este, Ralph.

* * *

LIKE it or not, the Whiz actually did his homework. He has a good point. The figures show that the professionals do not actually pay a lot of taxes.

It seems that the ordinary workers pay a lot more taxes than the highly paid executives, or the professionals, or the *bomba* stars.

Between us girls, I took a peek at the BIR list of the top taxpayers. Believe me, it only had a few movie personalities.

Let's see, the most striking name to me was that of Kris Aquino. I think that's admirable.

I'm sure many others in the entertainment sector earn much more than Kris. For all her stormy love affairs, it turns out Kris is in fact a good citizen. I still don't like the way she talks.

* * *

NOT surprising was the name of the megastar Sharon Cuneta, who I suppose paid a lot of taxes not because of Sen. Kiko Pangilinan. I heard that the guy is clean.

Shawie actually made a lot of money from product endorsements, and she paid the corresponding taxes honestly.

That I cannot say for another famous endorser. His name was missing in the BIR list. It was not even in the next hundred.

Look, even the name of the king of comedy was in the list. Dolphy actually paid a lot of taxes, although he is definitely not running for public office because he knows he will win.

Another consistent top taxpayer from the movies is, of course, none other than FPJ, although nobody can say yet whether the King is or is not...you know, for 2004.

So what happened to the others? I know *na*! It was a bad year for *bomba*.

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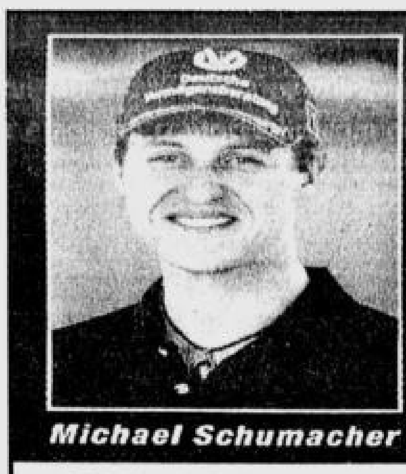

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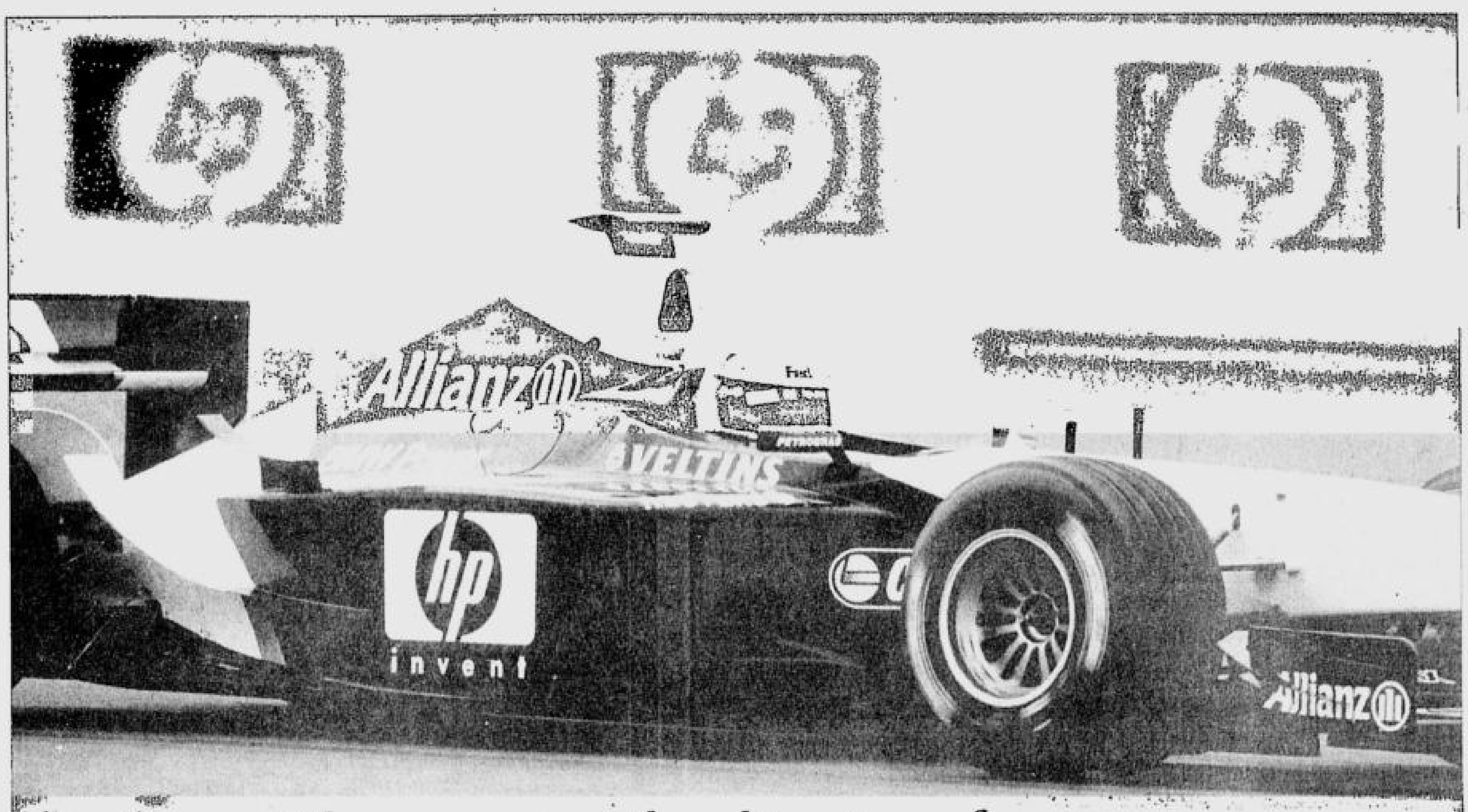

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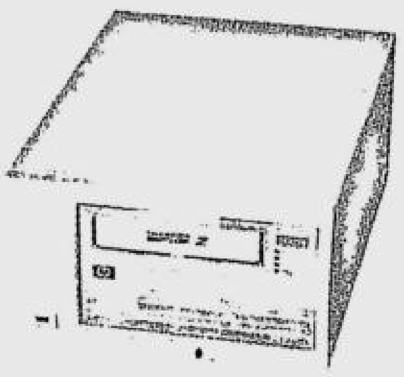

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RAINBOW VILLAGE 5 LA216m² P3,703/m² Vic 8903461 loc. 25

LAS PINAS

METROCOR Back of SM 254sqm 4800/m² 800-4771

MARIKINA

Near Roosevelt College 286sqm T9330092

MUNTINLUPA

PLEASANT VILL w/proposed rd direct to FILINVEST ALABANG 477m² P3,960/m² SOUTH GREENHEIGHTS VILL 300m² P3,833/m² Vic 8903461 loc. 25/27

PASIG

★Greenmdows 980m² 4121825★

METROVILLE SUBD LA333m² P4,054/m² Vic 8903461 loc. 27

QUEZON CITY

Coml site alng Comnwealth nr Fairview 1140m² 951-4536

SALE-Rema Vill. T.Sora Lot 355m² 2M Neg 843-2742

RIZAL

380LA P2500/m² Ampld Sn Mateo 09177308702/4140278

Valley Golf 1764m² West view of golf course 4121825

St. Andrew CAINTA 632-1739

OTHER AREAS

Tagaytay Lot 80-120sqm P4,288-6,432.00/mo. 2727814

TAGAYTAY VIEW LOTS-300m² up w/ club & golf memb 5yrs No DP int free 5247900 / 09175022722

TOWN & COUNTRY HILLS LA240sqm P3,125/sqm Vic 8903461 Loc. 27

OTHER PROVINCIAL

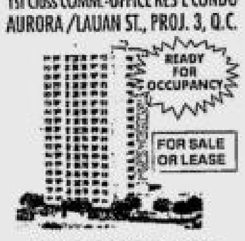
9000 sqm Sulipan, Apalit P1700 per sqm Along Mc Arthur 1330 sqm Sta Lucia Sn Fdo Pamp w/ Fench P3/sqm Call 0919-4439236

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

QUEZON CITY

One BEATRIZ Tower
1st Class COMM.-OFFICE RES'L CONDO
AURORA /LAUAN ST., PROJ. 3, Q.C.



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LOT

OTHER PROVINCIAL

✣IBA, ZAMBALES 10has 45M nr hway titled 0919-2221766

✣IBA, ZAMBALES 10has 40M 500meters nr beach 09192221766

✣ZAMBALES 18has 10M 100 mango trees 0919-2221766

BATANGAS

TAAL Bings 200m from Diversion Rd LA6794m² P186/m² Vic 8903461 loc. 27

CAVITE

• AYALA WESTGROVE • 605sqm P714sqm Financing Available DB Only Off. Hrs. 893-2311

★Cavite 20has @ P300/sqm T-4102425 Cecille

PROVINCIAL

★TAGAYTAY BEST LOTS★ alng hway lowdp/mo 240m²-up morning sun Toll 6508704

TAGAYTAY COUNTRY HOMES 180m² P3,500/m² Vic Gigie 8903461 loc. 27/25

MEMORIAL LOT

MMP Sucat 55T 655-0667

FARM/FISHPEN/ RAWLANDS

Farm Lipa near Malarayat 5.5M 434-3197 0917-8343815

✣ZAMBALES 17has 1600mango trees 26M DBO 0919-2221766

TAAL Bings 200m from Diversion Rd LA6794m² P186/m² Vic 8903461 loc. 27

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

ALABANG

FOR RENT
82 Tanauan Ayala Alab. Lot. 475/Flr. 700sqm.
• Call MYRNA 893-1043 •

MAKATI

New 4BDR&3TB near LaSalle FA200m² 8330796 09175309804

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MANDALUYONG

5BR 2Tb H²o w/Grge 5310965

Luna Mencias 37T neg 5BR 7TB 2pkg 460m² bnew 4578041

PARANAQUE

BLSubd. Pque Txt Marivic 0917-8920212 P10T

MAKATI SOUTH HILLS
PARANAQUE
w/ security ideal for expats 2-Stry Hse 3BR Scrnd 3TB Maids BR TB Spacious w/Tel plenty H2O
• Call 823-2391 •

PASIG

80sqm 9160535 / 7284275

SAN JUAN

Near Greenhills 4BR 4TB Maids Rm Garage 40T 929-6671 or 0919-4404020

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

2F LEGASPI TOWERS 100 25T/mo. 1BR 66sqm w/2A/C Alan 8184277 / 0917-4932309

4BR Condo For Lease Rizal Twr, Rockwell Makati Call 8982416 or email:plam1a@yahoo.com

7A AMORSOLO Apt. Condo 15T/mo. 1BR w/A/C 8184277

MANILA

FOR RENT: Condos Malate Manila Penthouse Condo For 2 Furnished, Fully Aircon, 24hr Security w/ Parking, Facilities For Telephone & Cable TV Call Tess T#:522-7710 Only 350T

PARANAQUE

WESTMONT VIL SUCAT PQUE Studio furnish Txt Ms. Merle 0917-8300401 P13T

QUEZON CITY

Nr Munoz Market Edsa 3br2tb P13500/mo. 414-5596 Neth

White Plains 2BR T-9115178

SAN JUAN

Studio Annapolis Greenhills Tel 7226022

APARTMENT

MANILA

2br StaMesa screnod no flood up&down family of 6- 7140071

967-A Dolores St Malate P10T T#5248325

MANDALUYONG

P12,500 - mo/ 3BR w/ TUB&AIRCON w/TEL. FREE-WATER 24HRS. MAND. CALL Marlyn 533-8536

PASIG

P8T SCREEND QUIET 2STRY T-635-4244 PREFR 1-3 ONLY 4 SN CLEMENTE KAPITOLYO 1BLK frm SHAW 1KM frm EDSA

QUEZON CITY

BNEW STUDIO TYPE APT 4 COUPLES SFDM QC 3730208

Cubao Lady's P3.5 9124428

★Cubao P5T/month as is T-4102425 Cecille

•P6.5T 2BR T-926-7383

ROOM & BOARD

Ldy Nr. MMDA Guad 0916-3656108

Proj4 2BR1TB 0917-4627142

BEDSPACE

M/F Prof Cuenca PC 8315026

Room-Ladies-Samp 7413298

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

BEDSPACE

Resdn'l/Clean/Furnis/Male/ 2PerRm/SingleBd T897-3770

RM/BDSPCE MKTI CONDO 8961712 / 0916-4387296

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

FINANCING-EASY FAST VERY PRIVATE CONVENIENT H/L Business Personal Gigie/Emie 8903461 loc. 25/23

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

FOR RENT
Makati Office/Warehouse
• Call MYRNA 893-1043 •

WANTED TO BUY

INVESTMENT BANKING FIRM (London Investment) Needs Credit Card Processing Co., Banks, Real Estate, TV/Cable, Telephone Co. info@iitonline.net 001-619-2969021

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL

Ofc Apt 920 Lunamencias Mand 532-0485 532-3126

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

'00 HONDA CIVIC VTEC FULL MAINTENANCE 09178151591 MR. PARK

MITSUBISHI

92 SPACEWAGON SILVER 225 NEG CALL 6310574

'96LncrEL 178T 09177872830

LANCER EL 93 F. Red FLD w/alarm 155T 0917-8350232

SUZUKI

SUZUKI GRAND VITARA V6 2.5L 14K Kms 2001 995K Negotiable •Tel. 810-6563•

TOYOTA

•HIACE TOWNACE 9267433

•HIACE TOWNACE 9267433

REV-O GL 0916-5486041

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Land Cruiser Pajero Surf Trooper Hi-Town Ace MU Safari Delica etc. waranty 9120647 09178342020 Glen

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with WARRANTY
★Pajero, Delica, Vans
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★Nissan Terrano, Surf, etc.
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STAREX '98 1stOwn 9Str LwMileage A/T 0917-9187976

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

ABC CARS/VANS
NEW MODEL ALL BRANDS
SELFDRIVE OR WITH DRIVER
MANILA 536-8822 • 303-9789
TIMOG Q.C. 426-2278 • 426-4004

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

CAR VANS 410-0495

★Vans Coaster Bus 440-9171

L300 T7411356

MARIAN CARS BRIDAL VANS CSTER 8957247/8969956

P800/L3 9136710/4333682

REVO w/driver 9272821

STAREX MB HIACE 8276605

TOYCO TRANS-UDRIVE OR W/ DRIVER CAR/VAN RENTALS 8006595

VAN 4 RENT 8254058 8261045

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5 % EasyCarLoan 4000166 -67

1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 6560140

1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 7262760

2% w/o Taking Car 7228942/43

2% w/o Taking Car 8870490/95

2% w/o Taking Car 8966633

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

FAST AUTO LOAN 712-5202

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BILLIARDS

BILLIARDS P33/36/38T Bnew A1 Qlty 801-4494/802-0566

Narra Pool Table • 7222222

COMPUTER

NOTEBOOK / LAPTOP IBM P-166MMX P14,500 80MB 2GB CDROM T-5500555

FIGHTING COCK

FIGHTING COCK IMPORT BREED 09178963251 LEVI

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT
ELITE PIANO CENTER
Almost New:TERMS-7213124

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Dog Trainer 09192050952

DOG TRAINER 4528681

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PUGS WRINKLED 3725231

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Wanted: FURNITURE CARVER CARPENTER / VARNISHER AND UPHOLSTERER Call 711-1505 • 732-4121

FEMALE

ASST./RECEPTIONIST For SM Megamall Branch College Level • 0917-8398638

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FEMALE RESIDENT PHYSICIAN TEL. (042)6511036 (042)5256586

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SALES PERSONNEL
Coll & Architec graduate
ACCOUNTANT
Acctng grad (F) 25y/or below w/exp. to work for construction/retail co. Look for Emily 9119602/9126196

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URGENT OFC Staff/Personnel 18/45 w/w/o exp Start asap Direct Hire 4752637 MARIEL

CHRISTIAN MEDICAL CENTERS Needs: DOCTOR, NURSES, Lic. CAREGIVERS, Send Resume to: hq@BNBTV.com or Fax : (619) 296-4532

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HRD Stf 09175047628 TRACY

MAIDS DIRECT HIRE 8705554

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OFC CLERK 09164591864 MARY

OFCSTF LEAH 09193352395

OFFICE STAFF 09173526206 LEA

OFFICE STAFF 09204114147 ALISON

Sales Executive- Coll. grad 7573844 to 46 - Elony

•URGENT OFC PERSONNEL 18/45 w/w/o Exp START ASAP DIRECT HIRE 7051798 Ness

WANTED: Stay-In Bantay For Computer Shop in V. Luna QC Call Odin at 921-5558

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

AUCTION SALE

C.Y. Lopez Pawnshop Inc. #233 Buendia Shopping Plaza, Sen Gil Puyat Ave. Makati City #602 JP Rizal St. Makati City; #15 Gen Santos Ave., Lower Bicutan Taguig. Real St. Almanza Uno Las Pinas City will hold an Auction Sale on January 25, 2003 at 9:00 AM. Including all items pawned up to August 2002 V. Zamora Jr. Lic. Auctioneer

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late IRINEO B. GERONIMO has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs with waiver of [illegible] 265 [illegible] No. XVIII Series of [illegible] before Atty. Zenaida Penaflor de Zuniga Notary Public, Pasig City.
(PDI-Jan. 4, 11, & 18 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost Stock Certificate Jollibee Cert.#006372 3,000 shares under Jennifer Fong (PDI-Jan.11, 18 & 25, 2003)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

EARN THRU PHONE 8965632

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINERS, EDUCATORS AND CONSULTANT Pls. Call: 0919-6 0 0 2 4 6 6

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INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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B/SELL FULLY PD EDUC PLAN 780-0106 / 0917-7939632

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HOTL & CONF CNTR 4 SALE PANSOL, CALAMBA LAGUNA 32 RMS, 110 CAP, 3 HOT SPRNG POOLS, 7 CONF RMS 1 BALLRM, GAME RM, PRAYER RM, COFFEE SHOP, VIDEO KE & BAR GYM , 2,082 SQM DOT ACCREDITED, W/MANY CORPORATE CUSTOMERS. •CALL:EDITH 892-8970•

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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INVEST IN AGRI-BUSINESS 09178473508 BABY / ALLAN

JUICE DRINK MAKING BUSINESS FREE TRAINING, RAW MATLS AVAILABLE 2554643 25376171

MLM FreeSnax 09207976167

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No product selling involved.
Self motivated, self starting individuals
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or Email:
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FEMALE 20-35 YEARS OLD
ACCOUNTING GRADUATE
APPLY AT:
SANTRANS CORPORATION
ALONG QUIRINO HI-WAY,
PANGARAP VILLAGE,
CALOOCAN CITY
TEL. NO. 939-3239

ATTENTION: Colleges or Universities/ School Operators/Owners/Investors

How would you like to operate the first Filipino-owned college or university in Canada? A well established private school in Canada, licensed since 1983, is seeking either a Purchaser, a majority stockholder or joint venture. This is an opportunity of a lifetime. For more information,
e-mail **best-care@sympatico.ca**

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
PORT OF MANILA
Customs District II-A
South Harbor, Manila

January 16, 2003

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 and 2607 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, there will be a **"PUBLIC NEGOTIATED SALE"** (Sealed Bidding) of the hereunder listed various articles/goods to be conducted on **January 27, 2003** (Monday) (Registration shall start at 1:30 p.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. & the auction sale shall start at 2:00 p.m.) at the Office of Auction & Cargo Disposal Division, Room No. 304, Customhouse Bldg., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila. Said goods/articles shall be available for public viewing on **January 24, 2003**. For further inquiry, please contact the following telephone nos. 527-80-51 local 437 & 527-19-75.

ITEMS/DESCRIPTION

One (1) lot of Tiles & Plastic Sunny Doors w/o doorknob
400 pcs. Plastic Container "Vallerex Gallon" (8 kgs) 200 liters
Two (2) units Spare Parts for Stone Crusher (Used)
Eighteen Units Used Suzuki Mini Van
"AS IS WHERE IS"

CASH BOND REQUIRED : P20,000.00

(Sgd.) **Atty. REYNALDO S. NICOLAS**
District Collector
Port of Manila

IMPORTANT:

Pursuant to Customs Administrative Order No. 3-94, approved on March 18, 1994, as implemented by CMO No. 12-94 dated April 07, 1994, a Registration Fee of Two Thousand (P2,000.00) PESOS is required to be eligible to participate in the auction sale. The District Collector has the right to reject any/all bid offer if it is deemed disadvantageous to the Government.

(PDI - January 18, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632)920-6401 • (632)920-6446
E-mail: *sssemail@info.com.ph* • Web site: *http://www.sss.gov.ph*

INVITATION FOR LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKERS FOR ACCREDITATION FOR THE SALE/LEASE OF SSS ACQUIRED PROPERTIES

The Social Security System (SSS) is inviting all interested licensed Real Estate Brokers for accreditation to negotiate the sale or lease of all SSS acquired properties.

Interested Parties are welcome to attend the Brokers' Orientation/Workshop on **January 27, 2003**, 9:30 AM at the Luzon & Visayas function Room, SSS Canteen, SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

For broker's accreditation, please bring the following:

1. Photocopy of current Real Estate Broker's License
2. TIN
3. Two (2) 2x2 ID pictures

For inquiries, interested brokers may contact Lulu M. Manahan or Ludy P. Andrada, Asset Management Department, 5th Floor SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or may call Tel. Nos. 4359875 or 4359877.

(Sgd.) **MARIANO PABLO S. TOLENTINO**
Assistant Vice President

(PDI—January 18, 2003)

PNOC PETROCHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(A WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY)

11/F, BA Lepanto Building
8747 Paseo de Roxas
1227 Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No. 892-0293
892-0283
810-7161
Fax No. 892-0346

RE-INVITATION TO REGISTER, APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested firms currently in good standing, to register, apply for eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the ***Financial Advisory Services for the Polypropylene Project***, with a contract duration of sixty (60) calendar days, providing the following services:

- conduct and prepare a due diligence report on the polypropylene business and its financial affairs;
- advise and assist PNOC-PDC in establishing the financial viability of the polypropylene business under certain terms and conditions;
- advise and assist PNOC-PDC in determining its present and optimum level of participation in the polypropylene business; and,
- evaluate the conceptual and technical aspects of the ownership structure of the polypropylene business.

Interested firms must have provided financial advisory services in oil, gas or similar industries.

The Requirements for Eligibility and Short Listing may be secured from:

The BAC Secretariat
PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation
11/F BA Lepanto Building
8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

Said documents shall be available at the above address during regular office hours, until January 31, 2003 (Friday), 5:00 p.m. A non-refundable payment of One Hundred Pesos (P100.00) shall be required to cover the cost of forms.

All Eligibility and Short Listing requirements must be submitted on or before February 11, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. at the above address. The opening of eligibility documents shall follow soon after. Only parties who pass the eligibility check and short listing shall participate in the actual public bidding. Moreover, the quality-cost selection procedure shall be adopted.

All particulars relative to registration, eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of Executive Order No. 40 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

PPDC reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, if there is evidence of collusion between relevant public officers or employees of the agency or the BAC and any of the bidders, or among the bidders, or between bidders and third parties, including any act which restricts, suppresses or nullifies competition, or if the BAC is found to have failed to follow the prescribed bidding procedures, or cancel the bidding due to supervening events. PPDC also reserves the right to waive any required formality in the bids received, provided that such waiver does not refer to a major deviation in a bid or any requirement provided in the IRR of E.O. 40 pertaining to the substance of a bid.

Signed this 16th day of January, 2003 in Makati City.

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

PDI-January 18 & 26, 2003

HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
Angeles City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

Requested Laboratory Equipment (Center of Development)

I. **ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING**

1. ELECTRICAL POWER SYSTEM SOFTWARE
- SHORT CIRCUIT ANALYSIS (Three phase and Single phase)
- LOAD FLOW ANALYSIS (Three phase and Single phase Balanced and Unbalanced)
- PROTECTION COORDINATION
- PANEL SYSTEMS
- MOTOR STARTING ANALYSIS
- TRANSIENT STABILITY

Can be used for Transmission, Distribution, Industrial and Commercial Power Systems

2. ELECTRICAL INSTRUMENTS
- Power Quality Analyzer (Voltage Analysis and Harmonics) (1)
- Insulation Tester (1)
- Digital Clamp Multi-tester (1)
- Ground Tester (Megohnmeter) (1)

3. COMPUTER UNITS
- Computer Server (1)
- Computer Pentium IV w/ CD writer (5)

II. **INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING**

1. FOR METHODS ENGINEERING LABORATORY
- Digital Stop watch (12)
- Radiometer/Photometer (4)
- Digital Barometer (4)
- Sound Level Meter (2)
- Sensor Selector (4)
- Scanner (max. document size 8-½ x 14) (1)
- Printer (1)
- Lapel Microphone (1)
- Multi-media Projector 3M (1)
- Bicycle exerciser with heart rate gauge & blood pressure gauge

2. FOR PRODUCTION PLANNING AND CONTROL AND FACILITIES PLANNING AND DESIGN SUBJECTS
- Production Management Simulation Software

For Inquiries: Please visit Central Purchasing Office.

(PDI – Jan. 15, 18 & 19, 2003)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 928-4501 to 09
Cable Address: "Philcoa" P.O. Box 3386, Manila
TIN #000724616

INVITATION TO BID

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) is inviting offer to purchase by way of sealed bids the property described below:

DESCRIPTION	LOCATION OF PROPERTY
48,749 Square Meter TCT No. 12840 with improvements	Town Proper, Alaminos, Laguna

Bid documents shall be issued upon payment of P5,000.00 which is non-refundable, from January 27 to February 18, 2003 at the Office of the Disposal Committee Secretariat, 2nd Floor, PCA R&D Building, Diliman, Quezon City.

Sealed bid proposals shall be submitted and dropped at the Bid Box located at the Office of the Disposal Committee Secretariat.

Sealed bid proposals shall be opened on February 27, 2003, 2:00 p.m. at 8th Floor Executive Lounge, PCA R&D Building Diliman, Quezon City.

The sale of the property shall be on "As-Is, Where Is" basis.

PCA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any defect and to accept such bid proposals considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ARTURO J. LIQUETE
Chairman
PCA Disposal Committee

(PDI – Jan. 18, 19 & 20, 2003)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources
Regional Office No. 4
2nd Floor, ICC Building, NIA Complex
EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION FOR NGOs TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Regional Office No. IV-A invites Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) to prequalify and bid for services to implement community organizing work in the following bays under the Income Diversification Component of the Fisheries Resources Management Project (FRMP).

BAY	PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITIES
Calauag Bay	Quezon	Calauag
Northern Tayabas Bay	Quezon	Agdangan, Padre Burgos Sariaya

NGOs that are to be considered for prequalification preferably should have at least five years relevant experience on community organizing for livelihood development and coastal resource management in the provinces and areas mentioned above.

The general scope of work involves organization work to establish community-based organizations; continuing assistance to the community organizations to build up membership and develop leadership and capability in undertaking coastal resource managemeet and micro-enterprise activities; and assistance in FRMP implementation at local levels.

Among the specific activities to be undertaken by the selected NGO includes:

1. Strengthening of fisherfolk associations and other self – help groups in the coastal communities to engage in income diversification and micro-enterprise activities;
2. Initiation of primary cooperatives to essentially become multi-purpose cooperatives, giving more attention to complementation of water – based and land based activities;
3. Assist BFAR in the conduct of education and training that is focused in mobilizing the organizational capability of their cooperatives to access external opportunities and potentials towards empowerment;
4. Assist BFAR in the conduct of LGU planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of various CRM concepts and best practices; and; institutionalization of such in the local development plans; and
5. Continue the unfinished scope of work by the previous contracted NGO in the said Bay.

Interested NGOs must submit notarized prequalification statements together with the required documents to the BFAR Regional Office No. IV-A which have jurisdiction over the areas where they are interested in working. Documents must be properly "tabbed" to correspond with each prequalification requirement and should be received not later than 5:00 PM on **January 27, 2003**. Attention: The Chairperson, Prequalification, Evaluation and Awards Committee. Forms for prequalification and list of required documents may be obtained from the BFAR Regional Office No. IV-A.

MS. ROSA F. MACAS – REGIONAL DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: BFAR IV-A 2nd Flr., ICC Bldg., NIA Road, NIA Compound,
EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City
CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS: 926-8616 (Telefax): 926-1901,
926-6071 to 79 Local 192, 193 & 194

BFAR Regional Office No. IV-A reserves the right to reject any or all bids as well as to waive any defect or informality to the submitted bid documents. It also reserves the prerogative to accept any bid it may consider as most responsive and advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ROSA E. MACAS**
Regional Director

(PDI – January 11 & 18, 2003)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
PASEGURUHAN NG MGA NAGLILINGKOD SA PAMAHALAAN
(GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM)
LUNGSOD NG QUEZON SANGAY II (SIBILYAN)
Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon
1101

IN-HOUSE BIDDING COMMITTEE (IHBC)
(GSIS Quezon City Branch Office)

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS Quezon City Branch Office invites all general contractors to pre-qualif and bid for the construction of the proposed GSIS Quezon City Branc Office Building.

Interested general contractors with Inter-Agency Committee (IAC classification of at least "AAA" (for buildings and infrastructures) an Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license of categor "AAA" may participate in this public bidding upon submission of their forma Letter of Interest and after passing pre-qualification and accreditation phas of this public bidding.

Interested contractors may secure the pre-qualification checklists an standard GSIS accreditation forms from the Physical Resource Sectio Administrative Division at the 4th Floor, PCA Annex Bldg., Commonwealt Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City during regular office hours startin **January 23, 2003.**

Deadline for submission of pre-qualification documents shall be o **February 3, 2003.** Pre-qualified contractors shall be informed of th schedule of the pre-bid conferences and the actual public bidding b registered mail.

The GSIS reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive an defects or formalities therein, and to accept such bids as may be considere most advantageous to the System.

(Sgd.) **ANGELINA A. PATINO**
IHBC, Chairperson
GSIS-QCBO

(PDI - Jan. 18, 20 & 22, 2003)

GITEC CONSULT GmbH
P.O. Box 32 04 46, D-40419, Dusseldorf, Germany

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines through th Department of Health has received a grant from the Federal Government c Germany through Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KFW) and it is intended tha the part of the proceeds of this grant be applied to eligible payments unde the contract for **"Cold Chain Equipment for the Expanded Programme o Immunization in the Philippines."**

GITEC Consult GMBH now invites on behalf of the Department of Healt of the Philippines sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of th following:

Lot 1 - Cold Rooms with Generators

3 -Cold Rooms, big (30cbm)	13 -Voltage Regulators
10 -Cold Rooms, small (20cbm)	13 -Temperature Recorder
13 -Standby Generators	

Lot 2 - Refrigerators, Freezers and Cold Boxes

323 -Freezer (Deep Freezer) - 170 ltr	308 -Cold box -20 ltr
147 -Refrigerator (Ice-lined) - 170 ltr	14,784 -Ice Packs - 0.6 ltr
98 -Refrigerator (Ice-lined) - 60 ltr	934 -Thermometer (Ref & Freezer)
207 -Freezer (Ice Packs Freezers)	
541 -Voltage Regulator (Ref & Freezers)	1 lot Spare Parts

The bids shall include the supply, delivery (to final destination), installatio of equipments as well as the users' training. The delivery schedule is expecte within year 2003. Bidders may bid for one or more lots, and contracts may b awarded for one or more complete lots.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by intereste bidders on the submission of a written application to the address mentione below and upon payment of nonrefundable fee in the form of cash, PhP10,00 on **February 3-17, 2003** from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Interested qualified bidders in the Philippines will be guided by th following:

Inspect and secure bid documents at:
GITEC CONSULT (MLA. OFFICE)
116-A Scout Limbaga, Brgy. Sacred Heart
Quezon City, Philippines
Tels. 925-2478; 929-0273
Fax No. 927-8386
E-mail: gitecmla@pacific.net.ph

Submit bid to:
GITEC CONSULT GMBH
P.O. Box 32 04 46
40 419 Dusseldorf, Germany
Tel. (0049-211) 4408-254
Fax (0049-211) 4408-204
E-mail:gitec@gitec-consult.d

Bid must be delivered to the office address in Germany on or before 10.00 hour of April 22, 2003. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 2% of th total bid price. Bids will be opened immediately after the closing of the submissio of bids in the presence of the bidders' representatives who chose to attend.

(Sgd.) **MARIA CORAZON B. NUBLA, MBA, MPA, DPA**
Local Procurement and Logistics Officer

(PDI-January 18 and 25, 2003)

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NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
THE CHOICE OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST DISCRIMINATING FAMILIES OVER THE LAST 102 YEARS
#26 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 7135231 to 35; 7140867-68
Fax No. 714-0865

OBITUARIES

Message of Thanks

MA. LOURDES FULE TAGAYUN

Joined her Creator on December 31, 2002

We, her loving husband DOM; children DESSA, PIA, MIC-MIC & MICO together with her grandchild MA. LOUISA and relatives wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all those who paid their last respects and grieved with us, offered and celebrated Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, kept vigil, were present at the necrological services, Novena Masses, funeral rites and who in various ways gave us comfort at the time of our great loss and sorrow.

In Memory of Our Beloved

Father

JUAN JALANDONI TUERES, JR.

On his second death anniversary
this January 18, 2003.

Masses will be offered today at 6 PM
at the following churches:

St. Paul the Apostle Parish
Panay Ave., Q.C.
Sanctuario de San Antonio
Dasmariñas Village, Makati
Christ the King Parish
Green Meadows, E. Rodriguez
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish
New Manila, Q.C.
Sanctuario de San Jose
Greenhills

Vispedencia Reyes De Guzman

Executive Director (Ret)
National Parks Development Committee

Completed a life of service and leadership on January 15, 2003

Her beloved husband **Ed**; children **Boylit**, **Jun Jun**, **Chi Chi & Eric** and **Maniya**, relatives and friends celebrate the woman whose touch will forever be etched in our memories.

Her remains lie in state at Aguinaldo Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat, Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City and cremation will be on Sunday, January 19, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory of the Passing on to the Next Life of

Ma. Bella (Belle) B. Pascual

July 28, 1949 - Jun. 19, 2001

Masses will be said in the following churches
on January 19, 2003

:30 A.M. - Holy Infant Parish (San Antonio, Zambales)
:00 A.M. - Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat (San Beda College, Mla.)
:00 A.M. - Holy Infant Parish (San Antonio, Zambales)
:00 A.M. - Queen of Peace Convent (Banawe St., Q.C.)
:00 A.M. - San Bartolome de Novaliches (Novaliches, Q.C.)
:30 A.M. - Nuestra Sra. De Salvacion Parish (NDC Comp., Sta. Mesa, Mla.)
:00 P.M. - San Antonio de Padua Parish (SFDM, Q.C.)

"Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, and let Your perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen."

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
lways caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

MANUEL AMAT PATRON

Retired RTC Judge

Peacefully joined his beloved wife **CECILIA**, *to be with the LORD, on 15 January 2003 at the age of 76.*

His loving children **Nelson & Tess**, **Rey**, **Cherry & Rico**, **Melo & Glenn**, **Noel & Trony**, and **Jun & Daisy**; grandchildren **JV**, **Hans**, **Iro**, **Ryan**, **Raymon**, **Cheesam**, **Sara**, **Camille**, **Cassey**, **Pauline** and **Migs**; brothers, sisters and in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Carmelite Subdivision, Lucena City.

Interment will be on 22 January 2003 at St. Ferdinand Memorial Park, Lucena City after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Carmel of St. Joseph Chapel.

CARMEN (MAMENG) C. ORPIANO

April 5, 1927 - January 17, 2003

Her husband **Vicente**; children **Manny**, **Elsa** and **Amado**, **Mildred**, **Naty** and **Michael**, **Olga** and **Buda**, **Sonia** and **John** and **Boyet**; her sisters **Esperanza** and **Consuelo** and her grandchildren **Jenny**, **John**, **Amabelle**, **Gail**, **Mark**, **Aljay**, **John Thomas**, **Jordan**, **Janine**, **Ivan**, **Vladimir**, **Michael**, **Oliver** and **Diane**; request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of her soul.

The body lies at St. Peter Memorial Chapels.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 22, 2003 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Himlayang Pilipino.

Hernando "Nando" T. Pineda

of Tayabas, Quezon

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 16, 2003 at the age of 79.

His loving wife Noemi J. Pineda; children Nerissa, Ganny & Marissa, Renato & Yolly; grandchildren Maricel, Kimberly, Nicole, Audrey Mae, Paolo, Christian, Cristina; sisters Amelia, Aurora & Abel, Alita & Manoling, Aleli & Ed, and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Luna Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park), Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 22, 2003 at Manila Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

We've added another dignified service to keep the memory of your departed loved ones.

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
CREMATORY SERVICES
ON CALL 24 HOURS A DAY
143 G. Araneta Avenue corner Kaliraya Street, Quezon City
Telephone Nos.: 749-3806 to 11 • 712-3001 • 743-6502
743-6505 • 743-6508 • Fax No.: 712-2782
102 years

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8

CLASSIFIEDS

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor & Employment

POEA Bldg., Ortigas Avenue cor. EDSA, Mandaluyong City, 1501
P.O. Box 4061/Telefax 42472 POEA PM
Tel.: 722-1142 to 99

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 18
Series of 2002

O ALL CONCERNED AGENCIES

UBJECT : MINIMUM SALARY FOR FILIPINO NURSES BOUND FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

Further to POEA Memorandum Circular No. 5, series of 2000 on uidelines on the Deployment of Filipino Nurses to the United Kingdom, and n order to ensure the adoption of appropriate pay grades for Filipino nurses vorking in UK when salary adjustment is adopted by the UK government, he basic salary of nurses bound for the UK is hereby pegged at:

> **"an amount not lower than the midpoint of the prevailing salary Grade B during the adaptation period / supervised practice and immediately adjusted to salary Grade D or above upon registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (formerly UKCC)".**

At present, the midpoint of the prevailing salary Grade B amounts to 12,220 per annum while minimum salary Grade D is £16.005 per annum. K-wide adjustments in these rates shall be monitored for appropriate and utomatic adoption.

For compliance.

(Sgd.) **ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS-BALDOZ**
Administrator

PDI – Jan. 18, 2003)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF DISPOSITION

The ***National Housing Authority*** is inviting ***Offers to Purchase a 104.80 hectare*** property, inclusive of ***1,843 row-houses***, on an ***"As Is – Where Is"*** basis, ***lock-stock-and-barrel*** at a base price of ***PhP 1 Billion***. This property is known as the ***NHA-Calauan Housing Project*** located at ***Barangays Dayap & Santo Tomas, Calauan, Laguna.***

The property, covering ***Sites 1, 2 & 3***, comprised of ***7,472*** serviced lots. ***1,843*** housing units (row houses) are already constructed within Site 1. Lot sizes range from ***40*** to ***60*** square meters.

All lots are individually titled and are under the name of the ***National Housing Authority.***

Bidding Materials can be secured for a non-refundable fee of ***PhP200.00*** from the ***Calauan Housing Project Disposition Committee*** c/o the ***Commercial & Industrial Estates Department (CIED)***, Mezzanine Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City. For inquiry, please call ***Ms. Evelyn V. Ramos, Manager, Sales Div., CIED or Arch. Susana V. Nonato, DAMO-SLB*** at the following Tel. Nos. ***CIED: (02) 923-0390, (02) 928-4561 local 302 & 303; SLB: (02) 922-9820; (02) 922-3319; (02) 928-4561 local 501 & 508.***

SCHEDULE:

a. ***Pre-Bid Conference***	**21 Jan. '03, 10:00 a.m. Operations Center, 3rd Floor**
b. ***Submission of Pre-Qualification Requirements***	**13 Jan. to 28 Jan. '03, until 5 p.m. CIED, Mezzanine Floor**
c. ***Submission of Sealed Offers***	**30 Jan. '03, 9 a.m. to 12 noon Operations Center, 3rd Floor**
d. ***Opening of Sealed Offers***	**30 Jan. '03, 1:30 p.m. Operations Center, 3rd Floor**

The Authority reserves the right to ***reject*** any or all others or any part thereof or to ***waive*** any required formalities and ***accept*** offers most advantageous to the interest of NHA.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Chairman
Calauan Housing Proj. Disposition Committee

PDI-Jan. 11 & 18, 2003

LEYTE V ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
P.O. Box 162, Ormoc City 6541
Tel. Nos. (053) 561-4075 / (053) 561-4111

INVITATION TO BID

The Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO V), Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte, invites all eligible contractors to submit bids for the supply of labor and materials for the construction of a 69 KV line and installation of a 5-MVA substation in Tabango, Leyte.

Bid documents shall be issued to interested bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of one thousand pesos (P1,000.00) starting **January 21, 2003.**

Pre-bid conference will be held on **January 28, 2003** at 1:30 in the afternoon.

Sealed bids will be received by the Pre-bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) at LEYECO V Main Office in Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte on **February 7, 2003** at 1:30 in the afternoon, at which time and place said proposals will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

LEYECO V reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any minor defects or informalities therein and to accept any or all offers or proposals as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the Cooperative. It assumes no obligation whatsoever for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **JOVENAL R. ALESNA**
General Manager

(PDI – Jan. 18 & 20, 2003)

Email: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph

People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Captain Safeguard's health crusade culminates in Bacolod

CAPTAIN Safeguard and the Germ Patrol's hygiene awareness campaign in Bacolod reaches the final stretch with the much-awaited Germs Away Day to be held at the Bays Center in Bacolod City today.

The Germs Away Day serves as a bonus treat for all schoolchildren and mothers who have participated and enjoyed Captain Safeguard and the Germ Patrol's visits to provincial schools and barangays, and have been taught the importance of hand washing and bathing.

Proper hand washing at appropriate times and daily bathing are the cornerstones of preventing the spread of unseen germs that cause diarrhea, cold, flu and gastrointestinal infections. Hand washing for at least 30 seconds is an important part of personal hygiene because it helps prevent the spread of germs that cause diseases. Having clean hands and body promote healthy well being that consequently contributes to productivity of both children and mothers.

The Germs Away Day is a daylong fun-way of learning good health habits that starts at 10 in the morning. The affair features Captain Safeguard and his Germ Patrol, with carnival characters like a ringmaster, jugglers and balloon-sculptors to entertain the crowd. The actual program kicks off at 12 in the afternoon, although participants can arrive earlier to win exciting prizes and enjoy the many games and booths to be showcased, such as the hit-the-germs booth, the one-on-one basketball shootout, the catch the king dumi-dumi, going to school relay, bubble show, and many others. Special prizes await the winners of the various games. A raffle draw will also be a part of the event. TV, ref, washing machine are among the raffle prizes. Also taking centerstage during the celebration is Miss Bubbles, who will present an amazing bubble show, placing children in giant bubbles.

The Germs Away Day also caps off the Safeguard Healthy Home Interschool Contest where winners will receive cash prize. A total of 15 winners will be selected from a field close to 100 entries. These entries, which are works of art, will be displayed at the affair for everyone to admire.

Everyone is invited to join the festivities. Simply bring an empty Safeguard carton to enter and be part of the celebration.

The fun activities of the Germs Away Day will also be enjoyed in other areas in the following dates: SM City Cebu, Cebu City on Feb. 9; SM CDO, Cagayan de Oro City on Feb. 16; and Gaisano Mall, Davao City on Feb 23.

DEPED ENDORSES GLOBE'S PROGRAM

Globe Telecom has once again received the endorsement of the Department of Education for its Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards (GTAAA), now on its 8th year. With the theme: 'Inspiring a Technology-driven Filipino Youth' the program aims to recognize young Filipino students who excel in Science and Math subjects in high school, and Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE) and Electrical Engineering (EE) in college. Photo shows Department of Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus with Globe Telecom public relations head Jones T. Campos (2nd and 3rd from right). With theme are (from left): Globe senior PR specialist Stephanie Velasco, Globe PR specialists Cecilia Odoño, Melissa Fontanilla and Steve Piczon.

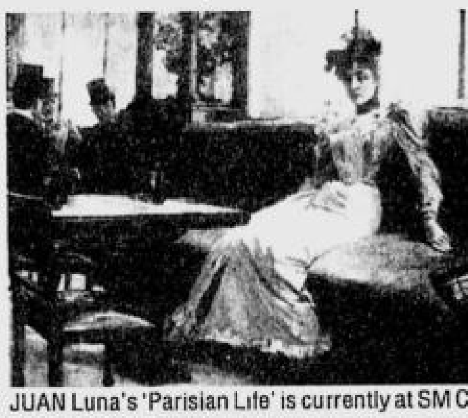
PAL 2001 PLATINUM AND GOLD AWARDEES IN CANADA

Photo shows from left: 1st row – Ligaya Bustos (Wide Wide World Express); Marilyn Alberto (Kintetsu); Mimi Pangan, Cita Tan (Yusen Air); Joy Manabat (PAL); Doti Manabat, Irene Ruga, Julieta de Guzman. 2nd row – Ronie Alberto, Fred Chan (High Light Express); Mario Pangan (PAL); Unyo Manabat, Nelson Acebo (U-Freight); Chito David (Aspac); Rico Brizuela (Airlift Asia); Edna David, Eduardo de Guzman (Sky Freight Forwarders).

Parisian Life at SM City Cebu

SM CITY Cebu shoppers will have a rare chance to see a piece of history with the exhibition of Juan Luna's Parisian Life at the SM Art Center from Jan. 13 to 21.

Parisian Life is one of the paintings Luna – the first Filipino artist to win an international award – created during his expatriate years. The 110 years old painting was created in 1892, his last year in Paris.



JUAN Luna's 'Parisian Life' is currently at SM City Cebu's Art Center.

It depicts three men – Jose Rizal, our national hero; Ariston Bautista, a doctor and supporter of the Katipunan movement; and Juan Luna himself – with a woman seated; at different tables in a Parisian café.

Parisian Life portrays the life of the novelist, painter, and doctor embracing the western lifestyle while remaining passionately Filipino at heart. It does not give the slightest hint of what will happen to their individual lives after that moment in the café.

Apart from the exhibit at the SM Art Center, there will also be a lecture on the painting from Jan 14 to 21 at 10 a.m. 2 p.m.

During the past nine years, both local and national artists have exhibited at the SM Art Center, allowing Cebuanos to have a better appreciation of the arts. In this project, it works with the GSIS in support of the conservation and promotion of the country's cultural heritage.

BEAR BRAND
Kitefest

BEAR BRAND KITEFEST 2003

Nestlé, the maker of Bear Brand, the country's leading filled milk, brings to Filipino families Bear Brand Kitefest 2003, which will be the biggest edition yet of the most popular kite-flying event in the Philippines. Ongoing for more than a decade, the annual Bear Brand Kitefest has become a highlight of summer, bringing wholesome fun and excitement to families in 10 cities nationwide. Providing IT services for the event is STI Education Services. Bear Brand Kitefest 2003 is expected to draw more entries and give away bigger prizes in various categories. In photo at the contract signing are, from left, Publicis-Ama executives Leslie N. Noble, VP for events; Elvina H. Gayoso, VP-account group manager; and Nestlé VP for milks Gilbert M. Joven and Bear Brand manager Michelle P. Acuña.

Gordon bats to make Makati 'Shopping Center of Asia'

MAKATI City, the Philippines' premier business and financial center with state-of-the-art telecommunications facilities, high-rise buildings, modern road network, world-class malls and hotels, residential condominiums, restaurants, and other services that cater to all sectors of the society gears to be Asia's shopping hub.

Following the pronouncement of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of making Makati City as Asia's shopping center, the Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Office of the President have designated Makati City as a tourism capital and "Asia's shopping center" in a bid to get more share in the Chinese, Korean, and Japanese market which would translate into more influx of tourists to the country.

President Arroyo said that the programs lined-up for "Visit Philippines 2003" will bring our country closer to becoming the shopping capital of Asia.

Philippine Tourism secretary Richard Gordon said that while Hong Kong and Singapore used to be the bargain centers of Asia, they have now become too expensive for shoppers looking for real value for money items.

Gordon also stressed that Makati is a well-planned urban center and can offer not only Makati residents but as well as tourists amenities such as golf courses, museums, spas and entertainment centers, aside from the city's proximity to the airports and easy accessibility to and from any point within the Metro Manila area.

A "WOW Makati Campaign Launch" set tomorrow at Glorietta 3 will officially mark Makati as shopping capital to be inaugurated by no less than President Arroyo, secretary Gordon, and Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay.

Pre-empting the opening ceremony is a parade to be participated in by the presidential party, local celebrities and "caracol" dancers, foreign travel agents and tour operators. Official guests and spectators are expected to join the street dancing and merry making, as the characterized by the "caracol", one of Makati's cultural tradition.

The program is designed to let the whole world know that the Philippines is the new shopping capital of Asia with its great malls that offer goods and services at competitive prices. It is also aimed at attracting more tour groups whose main interest is in shopping and to spur entrepreneurial and business activities where Filipinos can sell their products to foreign visitors, Gordon concluded.

A four-day/3-nights shopping package for as low as $165.00, tagged as "More than the Usual Shopping Experience" awaits shoppers where they will be treated with various activities such as bar-hopping or musical entertainment, dinner at Kamayan restaurant, lunch in any of the trendy Makati restaurants, whole day shopping delights, visits to night markets near Sta. Ana Racetrack, Intramuros tour, and adventure shopping in Divisoria –one of the country's original bargain centers to the high-end shopping in the Powerplant Mall in Rockwell, Makati City.

Discounts and rebates will also be given to all foreign passport holders issued with booklets upon their check-in in their respective hotels.

Shuttle buses free of charge will be provided by selected hotels to bring tourists to the malls within Makati.

'FPJ' movement launched today

A FORMAL national launching of the FPJ movement (Freedom, Peace & Justice movement) will be held today, 8 a.m. at the Cebu Grand Hotel, Cebu City.

Expected to attend the launching are the heads of the different FPJ organizations that were informally organized all over the country whose main objective is to come up with a signature campaign in their respective localities to appeal to Mr Fernando Poe Jr. to run for the president of the Philippines.

The meeting in Cebu City was highlighted by the election of its national officers and the approval of the rationale behind FPJ's candidacy. Proposed activities such as the escalation of the nationwide signature campaign will be thoroughly discussed.

The proposed creation of a national secretariat will also be discussed, the purpose of which is to coordinate and synchronize related activities of all local chapters in relation to the signature campaign.

Members of the core/convenor group, former assemblyman Reuben Canoy, lawyers Lorie dela Cerna, Ed Tamondong, Manny Portes, Julius Raboca and other prominent leaders of the movement in their respective localities will be in Cebu City to grace the occasion. After the meeting, a press conference will be held wherein the officers will highlight the movements course of action which it believes will finally make Fernando Poe Jr. heed the call of the Filipino people to run for president. A ceremonial signature campaign will be conducted in the heart of the city, which will then signal the accelerated signature campaign nationwide.

DOWN SYNDROME CONSCIOUSNESS MONTH

The month of February 2003 will be a very special month for our very special children. By virtue of proclamation made by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, for the first time ever and every February henceforth, we shall be celebrating Down Syndrome Consciousness Month nationwide. In observance of this, the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines Inc. (DSAPI) will have a 'Buddy Walk' on Feb. 15 at the Ayala Commercial Center. Assembly time is at 8 a.m. at the San Lorenzo Village Park, Makati. The DSAPI is also having their First Golf Cup, a fund raising golf tournament entitled 'Tee-Up for Downs' on Feb. 7, to be held at the Valley Golf and Country Club executive course. Tee-off time is from 6 a.m. till 8 a.m. On Feb. 23, a convention will be held at the La Salle Greenhills auditorium. Registration is at 8 a.m. For more details, please call the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines Inc. office. Telefax (63-2) 895-9642 or visit us at MRCFI Bldg. Camia St. Guadalupe Viejo, Rockwell Compound, Makati City. Photo shows the contract signing for the DSAPI Cup (from left): Alex Marquez, president, Valley Golf; Malu Ortiz, chair, DSAPI golf committee; Jing Warren and guest.

Product FILES

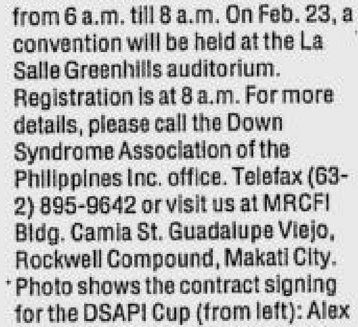
SmartTalk NDD rates down to P3 per minute

USERS of SmartTalk payphones in various military camps can now call more of their friends and relatives this Christmas as leading wireless service provider Smart Communications Inc. cuts down its NDD rate to a uniform P3 per minute call to any major landline phones.

The new rate reflects a cut of as much as 81 percent. Prior to the rate adjustment, calls from a SmartTalk GSM payphone to a Luzon landline cost P12 per minute; P14 per minute to any landline in the Visayas; and P16 per minute for calls to Mindanao.

Smart recently installed payphones in military training camps nationwide to provide affordable communication to thousands of soldiers and their families living inside the camps. SmartTalk payphones have been likewise installed in malls, on board the ships of the Negros Navigation Co. Inc. and vessels of Cebu Ferries and inside Philippine Rabbit and Victory Liner buses.

SmartTalk is also the only payphone in the country capable of two-way 'texting'.



US space agency to send 2 rovers to Mars

PASADENA, California—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) is readying identical twin rovers for a mission to Mars, where the six-wheeled buggies will prospect for geologic evidence that the Red Planet once had enough water to support life.

The rovers will be part of an international flotilla of spacecraft expected at Mars by 2004. It will include no fewer than four orbiting satellites from Europe, Japan and the United States, and another lander, the British Beagle 2.

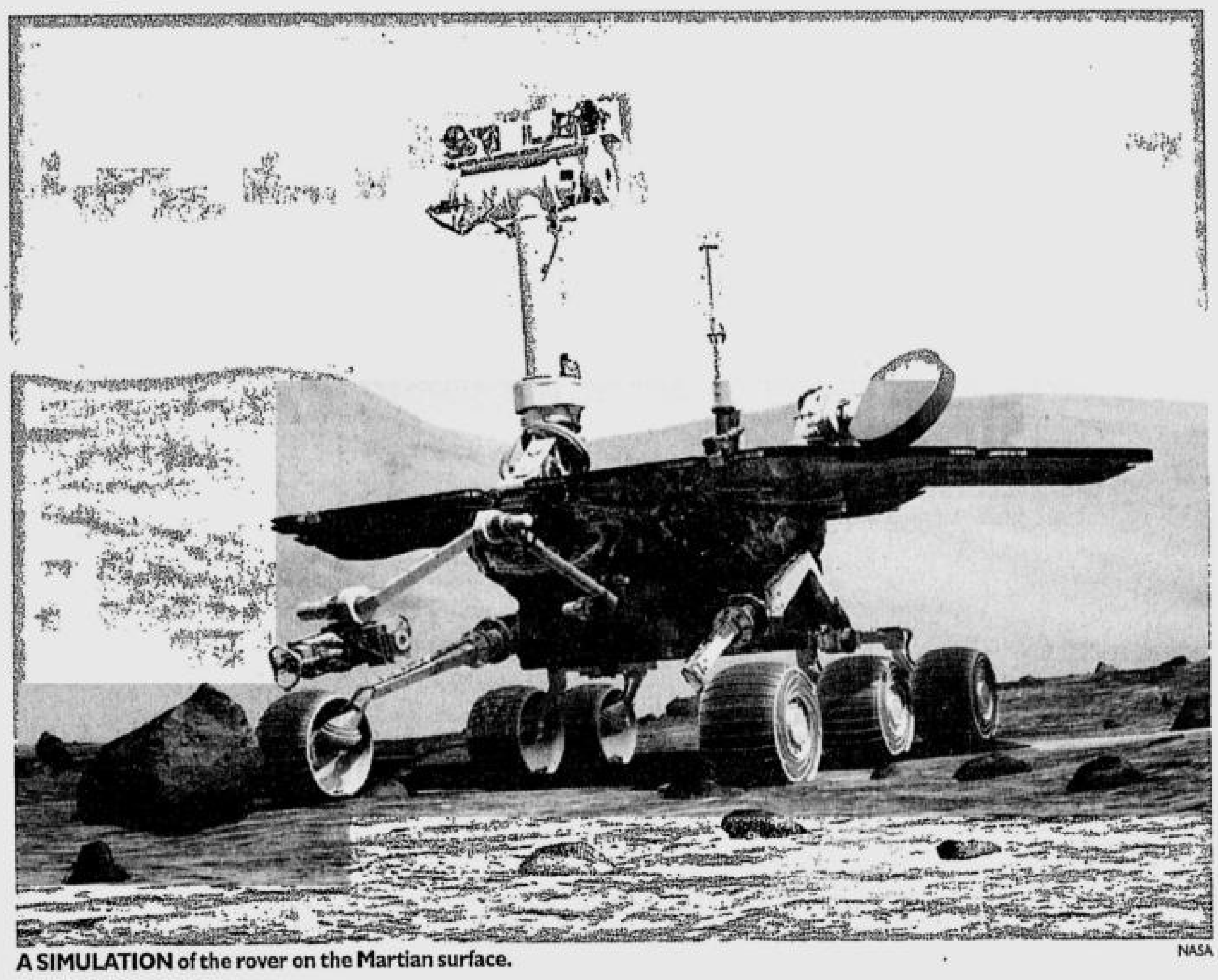
Engineers at Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory are scrambling to finish assembling and testing the two rovers for launch on separate rockets in May and June.

The $800-million double mission marks Nasa's second and most ambitious bid yet to roam the surface of Mars.

During the 1997 Pathfinder mission, the 10-kilo Sojourner rover scurried about 91 meters across Mars. The latest rovers weigh 181 kilos each and will be able to cover far more ground, though at a tortoise's pace.

Robot field geologists

"What we're trying to do is put two field geologists on the surface of Mars," mission science manager John Callas said. "What does a field geologist do? It uses its senses and arms and legs. We've designed a robotic vehicle that mimics those capabilities."



A SIMULATION of the rover on the Martian surface.

NASA

The rovers—flat-topped buggies with bat-wing solar panels and a 1.5-meter-high mast—will examine the rocks and soil for clues that water was once present on the surface of Mars.

"You really want to focus on water because water, of course, is the only absolute prerequisite of life," said Matthew Golombek, who is helping pick the landing sites.

Mars has been the site of some of the space agency's biggest triumphs and some of its most humiliating failures, too. Nasa lost two spacecraft at Mars in 1999. Sending two rovers is seen as a way to increase the chances of success.

7-month trip

The rovers will plunge into the Martian atmosphere after a seven-month trip from Earth and bounce down onto the planet in 2004 while swaddled in air bags. The rovers are designed to then trundle off on their own.

The rovers should last 90 days. During that time, engineers hope each will drive 594 meters, examine six rocks and take sweeping, high-resolution panoramas of the Martian landscape, relaying the images and the mineralogical and chemical data back to Earth.

For now the robots are known as Mars Exploration Rovers A and B, although the Planetary Society and Lego are sponsoring a student contest to name them.

AP

Health dep't: Metro Manila No. 2 in dengue cases

DON'T think that dengue fever is just a rainy season disease. Even though most cases occur during the months of July through October, dengue-carrying mosquitoes are disrespectful of people, time, seasons or locations.

"The global prevalence of dengue has grown dramatically in recent decades," the World Health Organization says. "Some 2.5 billion people—two-fifths of the world's population—are now at risk from dengue." The WHO currently estimates that there may be at least 50 million cases of dengue infection worldwide every year.

Major concern

When you imagine five out of seven Filipinos being infected this year, you can begin to see why dengue has become such a major public health concern.

During dengue epidemics, attack rates among susceptible people are often 40 to 50 percent, but may reach 80 to 90 percent, the WHO points out.

Dengue hemorrhagic fever, with bleeding in the gums, skin, intestinal tract, and enlargement of the liver; and dengue shock, when the blood vessels don't work right, can both be fatal. These most severe forms require prompt hospitalization. With no vaccine or cure, dengue fever is another burden on life not just in developing countries, where it started and persists, but all over the world.

Easy prey

Children, with lower resistance levels, make easy prey. Health department statistics for the first nine months of 2002, the latest data available, show that out of all reported cases, nearly one out of two children aged 1 to 9 were helpless.

The first symptom is feeling very tired. Then you'll have a terribly bad headache. A fever, mild at first, will later cause sweating and severe muscle aches, more feeling like you're being punched from the inside.

Dengue prone

Urban areas are especially dengue prone. This explains why Region 7 (which includes Metro Cebu) and Metro Manila are ranked first and second, respectively, in the number of cases reported.

The dengue mosquito bites only in the daytime. Treatment usually calls for lots of rest and fluids with pain relievers. Prevention is still the best defense however. The only way that this can be done is by fighting the mosquitoes that spread the disease.

Low toxicity

In the war on dengue, you'll want to use an insect spray that's very effective. So look for one with the active ingredients ETOC and Sumethrin. These chemicals are known for their low toxicity to humans and household pets. ETOC is known for its instant knock-down effect on flying insects. These ingredients are tough on dengue mosquitoes, but kinder to you.

Research by Japan's Sumitomo Chemical Co. found that ETOC has the highest insect-stopping potency among the knock-down pyrethroids. This formulation is found in Crocodile Odorless Mosquito Spray.

Filtering water through sari cloth can halve cholera cases, says study

WASHINGTON—Forcing water through a simple filter made from the cloth of old saris can reduce cholera cases by about half, according to a study of rural villages in Bangladesh.

Researchers suggest the sari filters may also reduce other gastrointestinal illness.

The study, which appeared in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, compared the effect of filtering pond or river water through a modern nylon mesh and through old, much-washed sari cloth and found that the sari solution was best.

"Sari cloth is cheaper and we found that it is much more effective than the nylon mesh," said Rita R. Colwell, a professor of microbiology at the University of Maryland, College Park and primary author of the study.

Colwell said researchers discovered in laboratory studies that most of the cholera bacteria in ponds, rivers and other standing water were attached to or in the gut of a copepod, a type of zooplankton commonly found in standing water.

When people drink unfiltered water, she said, they swallow the copepods and introduce cholera bacteria into their system. The germ can thrive, releasing a toxin that causes extreme diarrhea and cramping.

Filtering the copepod, said Colwell, reduced the cholera rate by at least half. She said there also was some evidence that other types of germs were removed because women in the villages with sari-filtered water said there was less diarrhea and other digestive problems.

Major contribution

Dr. John Mekalanos, a cholera expert and professor at the Harvard Medical School, said Colwell and her co-authors "have made a major contribution to the control of cholera" by demonstrating an easy way for rural, Third World people to protect themselves from a major health problem.

"Anytime you can reduce a life-threatening disease by (50 percent) with something this simple it could make a big difference in the region and elsewhere in the world," Mekalanos said.

There were 184,000 cases of cholera reported from 58 countries in 2001, according to the World Health Organization. More than 2,700 people died.

Colwell said experiments showed that old sari cloth filtered better than new cloth. As the sari is washed repeatedly, she said, the spaces between threads in the cloth mesh narrow and trap finer particles. Folded eight times, she said, the sari cloth filters particles as small as 20 microns. A human hair is 25 to 50 microns in diameter.

"We tried other material, but the sari was by far the most effective," said Colwell.

AP

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Flossing

I HAVE always been an advocate of brushing. I brush three times a day. But I never liked flossing. It seems like such a hassle. I can't imagine myself flossing three times a day. Do I really need to floss? My teeth look fine anyway.

Miguel A.

Your teeth may look fine now but eventually, small cavities may start to develop. And what about your gums? If you look close enough, you'll notice that your gums are a little receded between the teeth. That's because of the plaque and tartar accumulation in the area. To repair the damage, you must have your teeth professionally cleaned to get the tartar out and have your cavities, if any, filled.

Flossing is less of a hassle than you think because you only need to floss at least once a day. Any toothless geriatric who learned his lesson the hard way will tell you that if you want to keep your teeth, you will have to floss them.

(The author is a cosmetic and general dentist licensed here and in the United States. Your questions are welcome at dentalqs@yahoo.com.)

Searching for cancer cures at the bottom of the sea

FORT PIERCE, Florida—Scientists plunging to deep corners of the ocean are finding rare sponges that they hope, against astronomical odds, could lead them to a cure for cancer or other diseases.

Researchers at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution pull hundreds of new specimens from the sea every year, hoping at least one of them will be tougher than the cancer cells they carefully grow in a laboratory.

The team journeys to polluted and pristine waters throughout the year to collect sea life from a submarine with mechanical claws and arms, pulling in bunches of orange, yellow and brown sponges that have developed their own systems of self protection. Most of the sponges have never been seen before.

"Nature can crank these things out, but to make them in a laboratory would be very difficult," said Amy Wright, division director at Harbor Branch.

Thousands of tests

The National Cancer Institute estimates that about 65 percent of all cancer drugs come from marine life and plants—their bark, roots, leaves and fruits. One of the more widely used anticancer drugs, Taxol, comes from the bark of Pacific yew trees.

But it usually takes thousands of tests to find one promising lead.

In 18 years of studies, only one sponge discovered by Harbor Branch has been promising enough to lure a pharmaceutical company's interest. A compound within the sponge, called Discodermalide, has stopped cancer cells from reproducing in early tests. In 1990, the institution secured a patent for the compound, hailed as its most important discovery.

Harbor Branch focuses on marine sponges because they are stationary and develop toxic chemicals to ward off predators, Wright said. The hope is that the chemicals within the sponges will kill cancer cells without hurting healthy human cells.

Rare sponges

The research institution is one of about a half-dozen looking to marine life for cancer cures, and it specializes in deep-water discoveries. Teams of researchers typically stay out to sea for two to three weeks, using a submersible each day to search for rare sponges.

The group looks for anything out of the ordinary. The scientist who discovered the sponge that yielded Discodermalide found it in surprisingly shallow waters about 150 meters deep during a scuba dive in the Caribbean.

During the scientists' research cruises, samples collected from the submersibles are put in a large freezer on the research vessel.

Once they return to Harbor Branch, researchers grind up small pieces of the specimens with ethyl alcohol. They then pour the mixture through a filter into test tubes, producing extracts as brightly colored as the sponges they collect.

The extracts are dropped into vials containing laboratory-grown cancer cells. If the extract kills 50 percent or more of the cancer cells, it undergoes more testing, but the vast majority don't continue to yield encouraging results.

AP

SAMPLES of sea sponges, right, are seen at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution in Fort Pierce, Florida, Dec. 13, 2002. After collecting samples of sponges from the sea, the team at Harbor Branch freezes them and grinds up small pieces of the specimens with alcohol. Then, they pour the mixture through a filter, left, into test tubes, producing bright orange and yellow extracts. Scientists hope these rare sponges could lead to a cure for cancer or other diseases.

Tough cancer cells

"Those cancer cells can tolerate a lot. They're tough," said research specialist Pat Linley. Linley grows lung cancer, pancreatic cancer and breast cancer cells in the lab and would be the first to see whether a new discovery could hold as much promise as Discodermalide.

Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis Pharma is working to develop a drug from the compound. Tests show that in lower concentrations, the compound is at least as effective as the widely used anticancer drug Taxol, Wright said.

"It's like a funnel where you feed in lots of materials and you end up with very few winners," said Gordon Cragg, chief of the natural products branch at the National Cancer Institute. "But of course the ultimate reward is when you do end up with something good."

He said that between 1960 and 1982, the National Cancer Institute collected 35,000 plant samples and made 114,000 extracts to test against cancer. Only two of those extracts produced "interesting" leads, Cragg said.

Developing anticancer drugs is particularly difficult because cancer cells are so similar to human cells, and it's hard to kill one and not the other, Cragg said. Current chemotherapy drugs kill cancer cells but also aren't selective enough, which is why they can cause nausea, vomiting and hair loss.

"But there are slight differences and what you have to try to take advantage of are those small differences," Cragg said. "The big hope is you can kill off the cancer cells without hurting the patient too much."

AP

FVR, Loren on other concerns of the heart

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

WHEN heart specialists gather together, they usually talk about hypertension, heart disease, cholesterol problems and anything related to the heart. Once in a while though, members of the Philippine Heart Association, which is composed of all heart specialists in the country, talk about nonmedical issues ranging from politics to business to spirituality. This is aptly titled "Other Concerns of the Heart."

Recently, we had no less than former President Fidel Ramos and Sen. Loren Legarda as our speakers. They gave us a peek into the heart of leadership, at least their brand of leadership. We got inspiring pearls of wisdom from two well-respected political leaders.

Thanks to Gynna Gagelonia, PHA media relations officer, and Marian Andaluz, Servier's corporate relations manager, I was able to get a copy of the highlights of the two speeches.

Virtue, not popularity

Here's a sample serving of the great food for thought the two luminaries gave us that evening:

- Values and virtues should be among the strongest suits of a true political leader. Leadership is a collective effort.
- The heart of leadership has four chambers: competence, intimacy, integrity and passion.
- Our rich legacy of heroism and freedom is the foundation upon which we must build our future security and prosperity.

It's interesting to note that neither of the two very popular leaders mentioned popularity as an important trait of a good leader. It makes sense that a good and virtuous leader will be popular.

However, in our country, as in many other countries, popularity is not the logical consequence of exemplary leadership. Looks, charms, in short—"show-biz appeal"—make a political aspirant popular.

Probably because of the seemingly insurmountable problems that we have, many of us tend to escape into the realm of the unreal, easily succumbing to super hero fantasies in deciding who we would vote for.

Good leadership

While many of our countrymen equate popularity with successful leadership, it's not really a major trait that determines the performance of an elected leader. This has been shown countless times in our country, but has apparently never left a lasting imprint in the nation's mass consciousness. Mayors, governors, congressmen, senators, even presidents are still elected based on their popular appeal.

There can probably be no sane disagreement that competence, Christian values and virtues are hard-rock foundations that a good leader must possess.

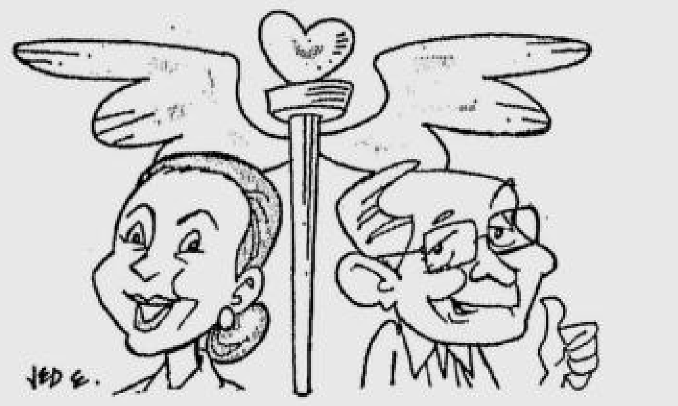


ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

One can only think of other "virtues" like good looks, machismo and charm when one has had too much alcohol to drink. And these can only come from people who have no inkling about what leadership is all about; nothing but a cinematic insight on politics.

A good leader must possess solid virtues before he enters politics. Those who only have a modicum of these traits are likely to collapse morally before they could even warm their seats.

Politics has a strong capacity to erode one's values and virtues. Politics, no doubt, has a tendency to corrupt, and previously idealistic leaders soon learn to bend their principles and subvert their philosophy to go with the flow. The current is simply too strong to go against.

It's a pity because I still believe that all we need is one good and steadfast leader, temperate but willful, dictatorial sometimes but righteous. And Filipinos, being leader-oriented and leader-dependent, will follow that leader as long as he or she leads with consistency, without any mixed or double-meaning messages. He or she will always be worthy of respect and even the dirtiest political tricks can never impute malice in the things he or she says and does.

Sincere senator

Senator Legarda gives us hope that we're not running out of good leaders.

Although we hear some nasty comments about the way she deals with those working in her office, I got the impression that evening that she was a sincere leader. A wife and mother who feels so much for the grieving family of captives, she went out of her way to negotiate for their release sometime ago. She said, "I did it because I heeded the summons of my heart. All that is worth cherishing, begging in the heart, not the head."

Not worried about how it may affect her popularity, the lady senator stands pat on what she thinks is right despite political pressure. A good example was how she voted on the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) issue. There was lobbying from all fronts at the peak of this issue. Despite the prodding of her husband, former Batangas Gov. Tony Leviste, to support it—since the governor had already committed the senator's "yes" vote to then President Estrada—she thumbed down the treaty.

She struck a sensitive chord in the doctors' nerves when she explained that she was strongly against the VFA because of the serious adverse effects of toxic wastes on the people's health. "The VFA concerns justice, it was not a political issue but a conscience call, and a test of one's integrity" she stressed.

Political cardiologist

President Ramos became a political cardiologist that evening by tackling the topic, "The Heart of a Soldier and Political Leader."

The country's 12th president, who gave "global competitiveness" a major push, said: "Democracy is a political philosophy. History tells us democracy must have values. Vigor and dynamism should be put in the right place."

He added that patriotism should find a place in the Pinoy's heart: "*Ang pag-ibig sa Inang Bayan para nang sa Diyos at kapwa* (Love for one's country is like that for God and fellowmen)."

He, too, outlined the importance of Filipino traits like *pagsisikap, pakikisama, pagkakaisa, pagkabayan, pakikipagkapwa tao* (zeal, camaraderie, unity, patriotism, good relations with fellowmen).

Filipinos need good leadership desperately at all levels, and we do not need leaders who are influence brokers or wheeler dealers, Mr. Ramos added.

Eating only when hungry

Apparently successful in impressing the cardiologists, a fit-looking FVR assured the doctors: "My heart is in good shape. I play golf. I eat what I can consume on my plate because I follow what Mao Tse Tung ordered his men—to eat only when you are hungry. I donate blood two times a year to the Philippine National Red Cross."

He will continue to "run" or jog regularly to keep himself fit. But running in another presidential election might not be a healthy exercise for him, or so we thought.

"He was the great man who led the nation out of darkness, literally and figuratively—for restoring power, making the Philippines shed its image as the 'Sick Man of Asia,' making the bourse bounce back resulting in a cheerful mood," said PHA past president Edgardo Ortiz of FVR—the well-respected statesman, husband and *lolo* (grandfather).

PHA President Annette P. Borromeo said in her opening address, "The 5-year-old 'Other Concerns,' which dissects matters that are nonmedical and spiritual, breaks from tradition and sees no borders. It has gone a long way. Thanks to Servier, our faithful partner."

"Other Concerns" is a "baby" of Ortiz with then Servier promotions director Rosemarie Ong and former managing director Dr. Gerard Lalande.

Dr. Philippe Molhant, current Servier managing director, said, "We have vowed to stay committed to this partnership." He pledged to collaborate with the PHA in coming up with more interesting topics and equally excellent speakers.

Seminar on wastewater treating technologies

PURSUING its commitment to preserve a clean water environment in the country, the Water Environment Association of the Philippines Inc. will hold a one-day technical seminar on "Alternative Technologies for Wastewater Treatment Processes."

The WEAP is a member-association of the Water Environment Federation.

Slated on Jan. 29 at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Ermita, Manila, the WEAP seminar will provide an update on water-related environmental regulations, permit requirements of the Laguna Lake Development Authority, wastewater reuse networks, pinch technology, activated sludge technologies, filtration technologies, sludge handling, treatment and disposal.

For inquiries, interested parties may call up the WEAP secretariat at 373-9790 and 410-1119.

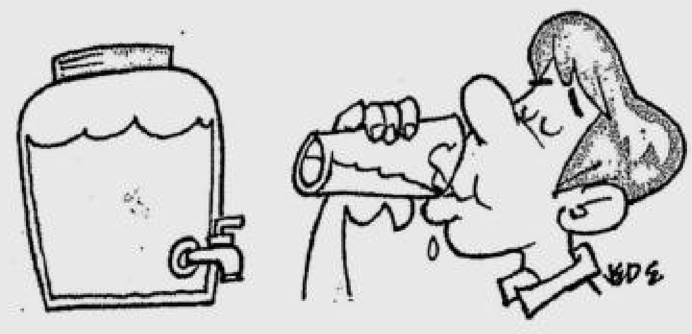


ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Combating goiter and crime

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

ONE heartrending disorder is iodine deficiency, simply because it can so easily be prevented.

Unlike many large-scale health initiatives, micronutrient deficiencies (such as lack of iodine) do not require huge capital and personnel investments.

DOST statistics reveal a dismaying picture. In 1998, the prevalence of iodine deficiency among children was 35 percent. In Northern Mindanao 32 percent are victims of severe deficiency, with Bukidnon alone having a prevalence of 71 percent!

The Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) explains: "Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) is due to inadequate intake of iodine either because the soils and water are iodine deficient or because certain naturally existing 'goitrogens' in foods interfere with the utilization of iodine. Iodine is essential for the formation of thyroid hormones that are necessary for growth and development and for proper metabolic function."

Dwarfism, retardation

The recommended daily intake of iodine is 150-300 m g/L. When the thyroid gland does not obtain enough iodine to make these hormones, it increases in size to compensate for its deficiency. This enlarged thyroid gland is called goiter.

"Severe iodine deficiency *in utero* can result in postnatal dwarfism and people with goiter can be retarded in their physical development. Iodine deficiency also increases the occurrence of illnesses in children, especially from respiratory infection. Extreme deficiency results in severe mental retardation, known as cretinism. Because of the relationship between IDD and intellectual capacity, productivity is adversely affected."

To combat this disorder, the FNRI used the most ubiquitous substance around—water! In its Tubig Talino program, a 5-ml sachet or a 15-ml bottle of "Water Plus I-2" is mixed with 20 liters of water, and this is enough to meet the required level of iodine in drinking water. Consumption of five glasses of this fortified water meets 100 percent of the RDA of a male adult. For more details, contact the FNRI.

DNA profiling

Certainly another heartbreaker is the deficiencies in our justice system. Aside from its slow pace, most likely the guilty go free while the innocent languish in prison.

Although controversial (the OJ Simpson trial comes to mind), DNA profiling certainly has its merits. For one thing, it is definitely more reliable than eyewitness testimony.

Our justice system is finally adapting this technology. Led by Dr. Ma. Corazon de Ungria of the Natural Sciences Research Institute at UP Diliman, a team of researchers is currently developing forensic DNA methods for direct application in casework.

Aside from criminal investigation, DNA analysis can be used to identify murder or accident victims. In fact, Dr. De Ungria was able to identify 18 out of the 21 exhumed bodies of Asosacion de Damas Filipinas Settlement fire victims in December 1996.

Genetic makeup

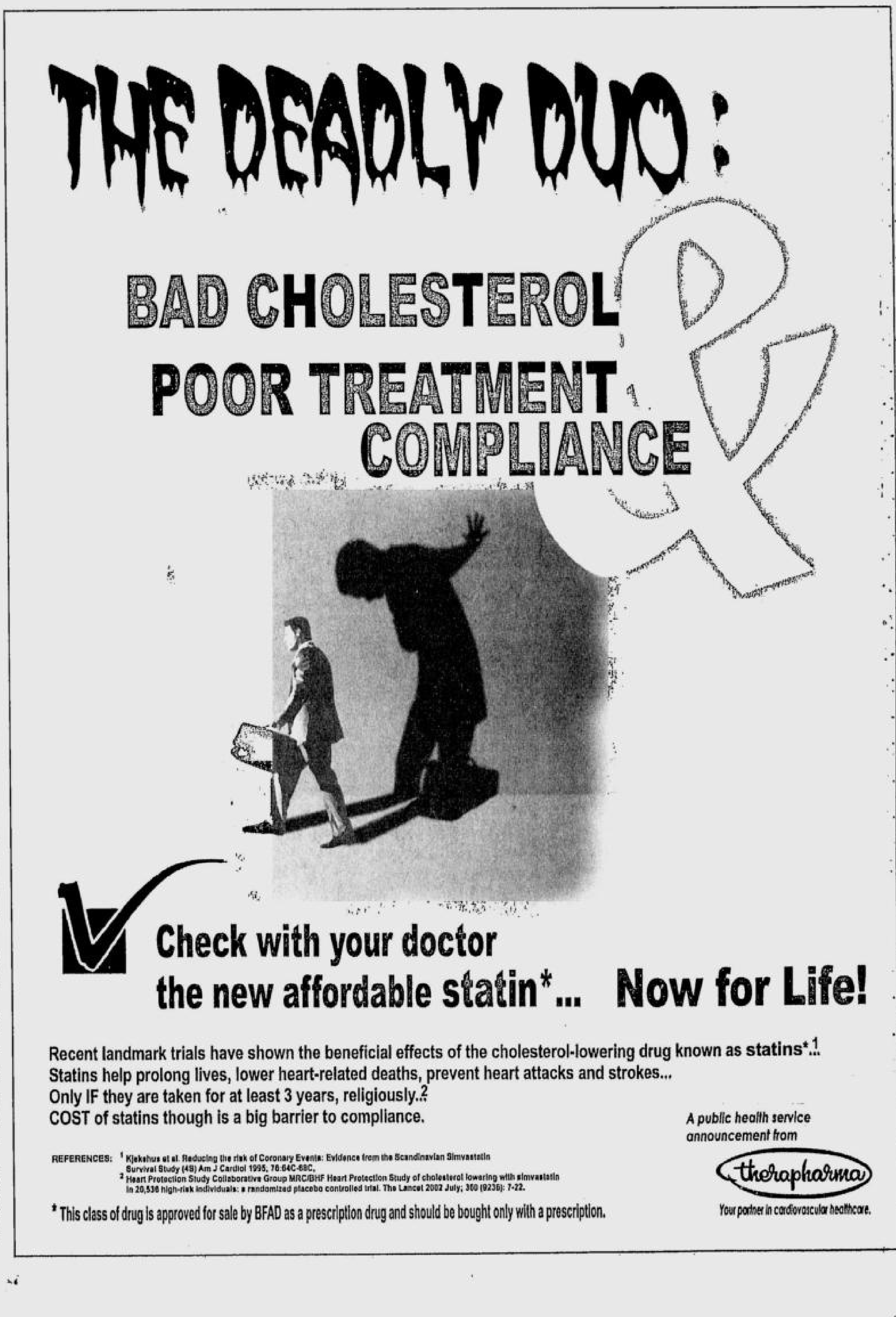
DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is the foundation of human genetic makeup, and since no two people have the same DNA (except for identical twins) and DNA can remain intact in the body for centuries, its uses are myriad. I foresee popular usage of this technology in paternity cases!

According to the S&T Media Service, "This is based on the fact that the DNA of a child has two copies (one copy from the mother and the other from the father). The DNA of the mother, the alleged father and the child are analyzed to establish paternity. The paternal DNA copy should then be observed in the alleged father."

The project is funded by the Philippine Council for Advanced Science and Technology Research and Development (PCASTRD).

For more information on the project, you can contact PCASTRD at 837-2071 to 82, 837-3171 to 90 locals 2100 to 2102. You may also visit the NSRI website at http://forensic.to/webhome/dna/dal.htm or contact Dr. De Ungria at 925-2965, 920-5301 local 6060 or through e-mail: mcadu@uplink.com.ph.

Last word: Reader Joen Moreno [joenm@yahoo.com] alerted me to a small error in the Jan. 4 article (Much ado about e): The Gateway Arch is in St. Louis, Missouri, not Minnesota. Thank you, Joen.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REFERENCES:
[1] Kjekshus et al. Reducing the risk of Coronary Events: Evidence from the Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study (4S) Am J Cardiol 1995, 76:64C-68C.
[2] Heart Protection Study Collaborative Group MRC/BHF Heart Protection Study of cholesterol lowering with simvastatin in 20,536 high-risk individuals: a randomized placebo controlled trial. The Lancet 2002 July; 360 (9326): 7-22.

* This class of drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a prescription.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang • Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

Vinegar keeps cervical cancer away

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE PROHIBITIVE cost and lack of awareness on the benefits of early screening for cervical cancer are being blamed for the continued high mortality rates of the disease in the country.

Two-thirds of cervical cancer cases in the Philippines are diagnosed when they are already in the advanced stage, where mortality is high.

Cancer of the cervix is second to breast cancer as the most common cancer among Filipino women.

Due to their limited resources, many Filipino patients cannot afford cytology-based cervical cancer screening or Pap smear-based screening.

Pap smears require a well-organized medical infrastructure with physicians, nurses and midwives trained in sampling techniques, well-equipped laboratories and cytotechnologists and pathologists trained to read and interpret slides. They cost between P180 and P300; results take about a week.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Acetic acid wash

There is, however, a way to complement Pap smears where facilities are limited.

Through the acetic acid wash, one uses only ordinary household vinegar to detect pre-cancerous cervical lesions. This simple procedure only requires the help of a trained nurse or midwife.

After swabbing vinegar to the cervix, the naked eye can detect right away if it has lesions. A cervix that turns pinkish means there is no wound, while one that turns whitish could signal the presence of lesions.

Acetic acid wash meets the requirements of a good screening test because it is noninvasive, is easy to perform and is inexpensive.

The Cervical Cancer Screening Health Operations Research of the University of the Philippines-Department of Health said it is the most cost-effective screening process in the country.

Dr. Corazon A. Ngelangel of the UP-DOH cervical cancer study group explained: "It's like putting vinegar in *kinilaw* (an uncooked fish dish). The fish turns white because its cells are exposed.If one has lesions in the cervix, it becomes white. Right there and then you refer the patient to a hospital for a biopsy."

Saving lives

According to the UP-DOH cervical cancer study group, the acetic acid wash procedure has a 51.5 percent to 76.7 percent sensitivity rate in detecting precursor and early cancer lesions; Pap smears have a sensitivity rate of 30 to 89 percent.

Ngelangel said gynecologists have found acetic acid wash a good alternative to Pap smears, which are difficult to do in places where people have little money to spare for cervical cancer screening.

Midwives assigned in areas with little or no cervical screening facilities can help save the lives of hundreds of women in their communities by using this procedure, said Dr. Arnold Liwag of the Gynecologic Oncology section, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the Philippine General Hospital.

Acetic acid wash is also done in India, Thailand, Malaysia and Mongolia.

Many women, however, do not know that they have to have themselves examined regularly.

"They don't give priority to health. A very good information and education campaign (will open up) the demand for all the services from the government, and government will provide it," said Ngelangel.

In 1998 alone, there were 4,536 new cases and 2,204 deaths due to cervical cancer.

The Philippine General Hospital treats around 630 new cases every year for cervical cancer.

In a year, 232,000 women worldwide die of cervical cancer, and 83 percent of them live in developing countries.

The incidence of the disease has been reduced in many developed countries through well-organized screening programs that detect and treat cervical cancer in its early stages.

Studies have shown strong associations between the risk of having cervical cancer and factors linked to sexual activity, including early initiation of sexual intercourse, having multiple partners, or having a partner who has had multiple partners.

Monitoring crucial for diabetics

By Charles E. Buban

DO you know that at least a third of people with Type 2 diabetes go untreated because they don't know they have the condition?

Many of them are diagnosed with diabetes only after they have developed serious complications, such as heart attack, kidney disease or impaired eyesight, according to Darryl Nomura, a training and professional education senior manager at California-based LifeScan Inc.

"This is sad because of the 130 million people with diabetes worldwide, 90 to 95 percent have this type of diabetes," he said.

Type 2 diabetes is a gradual syndrome with the signs of the disease developing over the years. For this reason, annual screening for the disease after age 45 is recommended, especially for those in the high-risk category.

Being overweight and not getting enough exercise can put one in the high-risk group for this adult-onset diabetes.

220 million by 2010

Diabetes is a chronic disease which experts estimate will afflict 220 million people by the year 2010. It is generally classified into one of two main groups.

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the body doesn't produce insulin, making insulin injections necessary. This usually develops in childhood, accounting for 5 to 10 percent of cases.

Type 2 diabetes is caused either by the body's inability to make enough or to effectively use insulin. People with this form of the disease may be able to control their blood sugar through diet and exercise. Others may need to take medicines to lower their blood glucose levels.

No cure yet

Nomura conceded that a cure would not be possible in the immediate future, so the best defense at the moment is to closely monitor one's blood glucose level.

"We found out that the more we can remove the impediments in monitoring—like the length of time to get accurate results and less invasiveness of the method—the more we can encourage people to practice regular monitoring," Nomura said.

Results of the 10-year Diabetes Control and Complications Trial in the United States showed that keeping one's blood glucose level as close to normal as possible can reduce the risk of complications involving the eyes, kidneys and nervous system by up to 60 percent.

In 1999, a landmark 20-year United Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study revealed that tight control of blood sugar and blood pressure levels in people with Type 2 diabetes sharply reduces the risk of blindness, kidney failure and heart disease.

Recommended levels

"How often you test and what your target blood glucose level should be is best decided by your doctor. It may vary according to one's age, the type of diabetes, the medication being taken and even emotional changes in your life," Nomura added.

The American Diabetes Association suggested the following glucose levels:

- Premeal glucose: between 80 and 120 (mg/dL)
- Postmeal glucose: less than 180 (mg/dL)
- Bedtime glucose: between 100 and 120 (mg/dL)
- A1c level in the blood: less than 7 percent.

"Now that we know the recommended levels, the next step is to take these measurements during these times accurately and conveniently," said Nomura.

He said portable monitors that are easy to use yet give accurate readings are now available in the market.

LifeScan's SmartScan Blood Glucose Monitoring System is the most compact monitor (no larger than one's palm) that needs only a small amount of blood sample (2.5 microliters) to give accurate readings in just 15 seconds.

"Soon we will have monitors that are no longer invasive but it will take some more time because detecting glucose in the bloodstream is a very complex process," said Nomura.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Puffs and bites

DISCOVER

Massie K. Santos

LAST week I opened a magazine and the following headline popped out at me: "Nicotine, Too, May Cause Cancer." What? I thought to myself, didn't we already know this?

Apparently, we did not.

It turns out that all these years everyone assumed that it was the tar in cigarettes that was carcinogenic, and nicotine was just considered the ingredient that got people addicted and then kept coming back for more. That view changed with the results of Phillip Dennis' research, published in newest issue of the Journal of Clinical Investigation.

Dennis and his team found that when lung cells interact with nicotine, and its derivative NNK, the Akt enzyme and all its pathways are activated. Akt is involved in apoptosis, or programmed cell death.

This means Akt can either tell cells "Die!" or "Don't die!" and the cells will obey. This can cause problems, because cells can die when they're not supposed to, keep on living long after their time is up, or come to be when they're not supposed to exist yet. The latter situation is what often leads to tumorigenesis—literally, the creation of tumors.

Regulating cell growth

Think of it as a permanent tooth growing over a milk tooth that hasn't fallen out of your mouth yet, which leads to capping, and most likely a few years of braces.

In the case of the cells, Akt is supposed to regulate their growth, but when activated at the wrong time, things go bad and aren't as easily corrected as teeth are. The coding for the cell gets messed up; not only does it appear at the wrong time, but it didn't quite get its DNA sequence in the right order and the new cells are mutants. With enough mutant cells, you get a tumor, which may turn out to be carcinogenic.

So does this mean that nicotine itself is now a carcinogen? Not yet, says Dr. Dennis, because it doesn't cause cancers to form by itself.

Still, I think that's just another reason to quit smoking if you haven't already. Now that we know these things, whether or not nicotine patches help more than do harm is another matter entirely.

Bats and strokes

Speaking of helping and harming, forget everything you've learned from watching "Scooby Doo," "Dracula," "Immortal Beloved" or even "Buffy the Vampire Slayer." When a vampire bat (I'm not completely convinced that the human equivalent really exists) tries to bite you, let it. Of course, that advice is best used if you're having a stroke rather than at any other time.

That's the lesson we learn from reading the latest issue of Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association.

Vampire bat saliva apparently contains the enzyme desmoteplase, which for reasons that escape me, has been shortened to DSPA.

DSPA is what makes it easy for a bat to feed, thinning the victim/prey's blood so it can't clot and close the wound. So what does this have to do with strokes, exactly?

Well, when a person has a stroke, blood clots form and block the pathway to the brain. Without the nutrients supplied by the blood, the brain starves and suffers a good deal of damage. With vampire bat saliva, however, the clots don't form and the patient has a better chance of fully recovering.

Plus, say researchers, it works within nine hours after the stroke happens, which, as anyone who watches "ER" knows, is a huge amount of time when compared to the so-called Golden Hour a patient has to receive proper medical care or else suffer severe physical mental or physical damage, if not death.

The current anti-blood clotting drug of choice only works when administered within three hours of a stroke.

Leeches, maggots

The idea of getting bitten by a bat may not be as gross as it sounds. After all, leeches and maggots have reentered the medical profession in the past decade and I'd have to say they hold the title to having the grossest healthcare jobs in the world.

Leeches are being applied on parts of the body where too much blood is gathering, which leads to swelling, which is bad. The leeches happily drink all the excess blood, which reduces the swelling, and everyone is happy.

Maggots on the other hand, are useful when it comes to eating decaying flesh and allowing new skin to regenerate, which is a scenario that is often played out among burn victims, amputees, etc.

But, again, I digress. The efficacy of vampire bat saliva is apparently already being tested in various parts of the world. I just hope no one turns into vampires for real, because it looks like this is Buffy's seventh and final TV season, and she won't be around to protect us after that.

(The author may be reached at massie@massie.com.)

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SATURDAY Special

Editor Nestor U. Torre ◉ Associate Editor Edmund L. Sicam

Phil Collins testifies in his own defense

COLLINS. As songwriter and performer, he has the habit of wearing his heart on his sleeve.

By Dean Goodman

LOS ANGELES—The only thing worse than being typecast as a sinner in the music industry is being typecast as a saint—as Phil Collins knows too well.

Hit songs

Over the past 30 years, the affable English pop star has grinned and mugged his way to the top of the heap, churning out hit songs such as "In the Air Tonight" and "Against All Odds."

Without the help of supermodel girlfriends, he has managed to sell 250 million albums, both as a member of art-rock combo Genesis and as a solo act. He is worth about $300 million and eagerly lends his name and check book to charitable causes.

Dressed simply in cargo pants and T-shirt, he seems like a regular bloke, good for a few pints at the local pub. As he does the rounds to promote his first album in six years, "Testify," he finds himself defending his relative normality.

"I don't pretend to be nicer, better, more holier-than-thou than anybody else," Collins, 51, protested—albeit very nicely—in an interview with Reuters. "I'm just slap-bang in the middle, I suppose, normal." The problem is that when he strays from type, even a little bit, there is hell to pay.

Second wife

After he left his second wife in the early 1990s, and went to live with a girlfriend 22 years his junior in her native Switzerland, the outraged British press accused him of everything from adultery to tax evasion.

"Of course I get crucified a little bit more than everybody else, than Rod Stewart or Mick Jagger would, who kinda womanize their way around the world," said Collins, who seems to have aged better than many hell-raisers.

In reality, Collins met interpreter Orianne Cevey after his marriage to Jill ended—"I was always very, very faithful when I was married"—and he happily pays his taxes.

"I make an awful lot of money, so I don't mind paying an awful lot of tax. I've paid tax for years, through the nose really." Collins adjusted well to life in Switzerland, and eventually married Cevey in 1999. They have an 18-month-old son, Nicholas, Collins' fourth child, and are trying for another baby.

On the professional front, his last studio album, "Dancing in the Light" (1996), did not recapture the huge success of his earlier efforts, but Collins was already focused on other projects.

He toured with his big band, and composed the score for the Disney cartoon "Tarzan." He won an Oscar in 2000 for "You'll Be In My Heart," his hit single from the film.

No commercial pressure

The new album, "Testify" (Atlantic Records), made its debut at No. 30 on the US pop charts, and has sold about 140,000 copies to date. But he feels no commercial pressure.

"I'm not in that marketplace anymore, and I'm quite pleased not to be, to be quite honest," he said. "I'm 51. I'm not gonna do the things that are required of me to be on MTV, if they were even thinking about having me on it, because I'm too old." As an "adult-contemporary" artist, mining the same easy-listening genre as friends Sting and Eric Clapton, Collins must drum up original ways to promote his music.

Following in the footsteps of Sting, whose last album got a boost when he sold a song to Jaguar, Collins lent his cover of the 1978 Leo Sayer hit "Can't Stop Loving You" to Toyota. The song became his eighth No. 1 on the US adult contemporary chart based on radio airplay.

But Collins is no old fogey either. By his own admission a bit of a technophobe in days past, he embraced computers for his new record. Sure, the system sometimes crashed and he lost more music than he cares to mention, but it also made it easier to arrange random pieces he had written over the years.

The title track—"I want to testify, testify my love for you"—is one of the most personal songs he has ever written, he says.

Debut solo album

He has a habit of wearing his heart on his sleeve. His debut solo album, "Face Value" (1981) came about after his first wife Andrea walked out on him.

"My ex-wife was livid, how dare I talk about this in public," he recalled. "But I'm a songwriter, and what is going on in my life will come out in song." The new album, released in November, luxuriates in domestic bliss, but Collins throws in a musical hand grenade with "Don't Get Me Started," a tirade against politicians, media moguls and terrorists. In explaining the track to a rather jaded guest, he finally betrays some anger, some passion.

"You can't believe anything you read, can't believe anything you hear. It undermines people's confidence in themselves. You just spiral downwards if you're not careful," he rants.

But the next song on the album is "Swing Low," which deals with the happier problem of impatiently awaiting Nicholas's birth, and all is well again.

Reuters

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Welcome to the senior citizens' club, Manay Ichu!

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST Dec. 23, film industry leader Marichu VP Maceda marked her 60th birthday. Weeks before that, we joined others in urging her to mark the landmark occasion with a special party.

Celebration

At the time, Manay Ichu said she wasn't sure if she wanted to make that big a deal about her becoming a "senior citizen," but we heard later that she was inviting people close to her to a celebration on her 60th natal day.

What she didn't know, however, was that her mother, Mama Nene, and siblings Pepito, Gina, Lillibeth, Chona and Cocoy were secretly planning an *asalto* for her the day before, Dec. 22, at the Manila Polo Club. The relatives and friends who were invited were sworn to secrecy, to make sure that Manay Ichu would be "deliciously" surprised.

Thus, when we got to the Manila Polo Club last Dec. 22, we saw no indication of the advance birthday party for Marichu. Instead, there was a notice about a Christmas party, and another one about a songwriting contest.

Dance numbers

When we got to the big room where the secret party for Marichu was to be held, we saw that Gloria Romero was one of the early birds. Manay's sons and grandchildren were busy rehearsing the dance numbers they would be performing for the honoree. We noted that the Maceda boys were good dancers who really enjoyed strutting their stuff on the postage-stamp stage.

As for Marichu's grandchildren, they delighted the preview audience with their natural charm and precocity. No wonder Marichu keeps saying that, these days, her being a grandmother is what gives her the greatest pleasure and sense of fulfillment.

MACEDA. Appreciative of her loved ones' efforts to mark her 60th birthday with an appropriately special celebration.

Silence

After 8 p.m., word got to us that Manay's car was approaching the Manila Polo Club. The lights were dimmed, and everyone watched in silence as Manay approached the venue with Martin Nievera, the son of her close friend, Conchita Razon.

We were informed that Martin had gotten her to go to the Manila Polo Club on the ruse of helping him judge that "songwriting contest" we had seen listed among the club's activities that night, which turned out to be nonexistent. Very clever!

When Marichu entered the darkened room, everyone greeted her Happy Birthday, and the venue exploded in a blaze of lights.

Honoree

Well, you can imagine the surprised look on Manay's face! It was quickly replaced with a grin of great delight as she saw her sons, grandchildren and siblings beaming at her, so happy that they had succeeded in keeping the *asalto* a secret from their beloved honoree.

Later, Marichu told us that she had expected that "something" was afoot, but didn't know what, so she was indeed surprised by the *asalto*, and very appreciative of her loved ones' efforts to mark her 60th birthday with an appropriately special celebration.

There was much to appreciate that evening, as Marichu's friends and loved ones cheered her with surprise performance numbers and loving testimonials.

Mother

Everything was capped by Marichu's dear mother, the 85-year-old but still perky Mama Nene Vera-Perez, who described Marichu as only a mother could:

"I feel so proud of what she is now—developing from a shy youngster (in spite of having been pampered by my parents and especially by her Papa) into a beautiful person who is at home, not only with kings and presidents, but also with the poorest of the poor—with both young and old—an A-1 student, a very loyal friend, a loving sister, mother and grandmother, and a caring daughter to me, because Ichu has such a great capacity for love.

"I am very sure that her grandparents and her beloved father (from whom she inherited her prolific ideas and love for the arts) must be smiling down from heaven at what Maria Azucena Salvacion Victoria has become!

Flaw

"She is a well-rounded person-except for one flaw: she cannot be a good businesswoman, because if she sees a poor person who cannot afford to buy her goods, she gives them away for free (*kasi kawawa naman daw*)!

"That's my girl, *may pusong mamon*.—But beware: if she sees that she's being taken for a ride, she will fight like a warrior!

"Marichu, my firstborn, you make me so proud to be your mother. I love you with all my heart, and feel confident that yours will be the hands that will keep our family cohesive all the way, as it is now, and as it has always been!"

Haapy Birthday, Manay Ichu. As your dear friend Conchita said at your *asalto*, "Welcome to the senior citizens' club!"

Madz training improves choral performances in Mindanao

By Ametta Suarez Taguchi

MADZ choirmaster Mark Anthony Carpio conducts 17 choirs singing Lucio San Pedro's "Awiting Pamasko."

RECENTLY, 17 choirs from different parts of Northern Mindanao participated in the Madz et al. Northern Mindanao Choral Festival held in Cagayan de Oro.

Graduation

The event marked the graduation of the participants from the series of weekend workshops on choral music which some members of the internationally-acclaimed Philippine Madrigal Singers had conducted from September to December.

When the outreach program was launched in Cagayan de Oro in 1999, only three organizations registered. Now the Madrigals or Madz are kept busy throughout the year with requests for their tutelage coming from all over the Philippines. Choirs do perform better after the workshops.

In the recent Mindanao festival, for instance, music lovers who watched the two-night concert agreed that most of the participating choirs were "already worth buying a ticket for *and* watching."

Particularly receptive

Cagayanons were particularly receptive to the Kagay-an Chamber Choir's rendition of Idem-dem Mallida;" to the naughty lyrics of Mary Immaculate's Singing Ambassadors' "I Wish I Was Single Again;" and to the Cagayan Capitol College Glee Club's difficult embellishments on "Jingle Bells Calypso."

The nostalgia evoked by the 17 choirs when they all joined together to sing Manoling Francisco's "Sa Iyo Lamang" and Lucio San Pedro's "Awiting Pamasko" drew tears from many listeners, including some cynics.

As expected, the Madrigals, who contributed a number at the end of the program with the perfection they're known for, received two standing ovations.

On the downside, my companion noted the tendency of many choirs to "xerox-copy" the singing style of their mentors. Though this is understandable—who does not want to be great as the Madrigals?—there is a need for every choir to define its own unique features and identity.

Uplifting musical entertainment

As a whole, though, the Madz et al. Northern Mindanao Choral Festival succeeded in demonstrating that a good night of uplifting musical entertainment can be provided right here by the talents of Northern Mindanao.

Organizations celebrating special events now have an alternative source of entertainment, in lieu of "importing" artists from Manila. Cagayan Capitol College is commended for opening an office specifically designated to handle the artistic and cultural endeavors of the region.

Movie buffs pick their favorite female film directors

By Noelani Torre

DIAZ-ABAYA, GUILLEN AND LAMASAN. Brilliant exceptions to the desultory rule.

FILM directing is a male-dominated profession in most film-producing countries, though women directors are slowly beginning to assert themselves. Here in the Philippines, female directors are still more of the exception rather than the rule—but they're quite brilliant exceptions.

Higher-quality movies

Male and female directors here are equally respected. We haven't heard audiences disparaging a film because a woman made it—in fact, they tend to expect higher-quality movies from women directors.

We have a steadily growing number of women film directors, from veterans such as Marilou Diaz-Abaya and Laurice Guillen, to newcomers such as Joyce Bernal. Curious whether audiences are indeed aware of these indomitable directors and their films, we asked several film buffs to pick a favorite among them.

Marilou Diaz-Abaya proved to be the most favored female director, with Laurice Guillen garnering the next biggest number of votes. Here are some of those film buffs' reasons for their choices:

Filipino values

"Laurice Guillen. Because her films have very Filipino settings, and she forwards Filipino moral values. In her films, the atmosphere and the flavor are Filipino, even in 'American Adobo' which was shot in the States and deals with life in the States.

"Her movies are technically simple—soft camera, photography, etc. She doesn't have to be technically complex to create that Filipino flavor. She's also very professional as a director, and I admire her for that."—*Paul Queri, Bulacan.*

Exceptional work

"Marilou Diaz-Abaya is my favorite female director *kasi hindi siya natatakot mag*-take *ng* risks *pagdating sa mga* subject matter *ng dini*-direct *niya*. And she does really exceptional work. She also knows how to choose which stars will best play the roles, those who are really good and flexible actors.

"She has a unique way of knowing which details should be included and what can be left out without affecting the quality of the movie. *Nakaka-bilib siya* because *kahit na di gaano nanalo ng mga* awards *ang kanyang mga* films even though they really deserve it, she doesn't give up creating those quality films that we Filipinos need and should watch instead of supporting low-class X-rated flicks."—*Christina Lumampao, Calamba, Laguna.*

Greatest impact

"Marilou Diaz-Abaya. Her films look like they've been very well-researched. She also has a good eye for the details that make the greatest impact on her viewers. I remember in 'Bagong Buwan,' when the soldier Jericho Rosales went into the *datu's* house without removing his shoes. That scene showed the differences between the Christian and Islamic faiths more effectively than having somebody talk about it at great length.

"Her films are also very patriotic. I feel proud to be a Filipino when I watch them, and that rarely happens nowadays. She can make a film that people will watch without resorting to senseless portrayals of sex and violence. I wish there were more filmmakers like her, male or female."—*Erwin Gallego, Makati.*

Magic realism

"My favorite female director would be Olivia Lamasan. She directed 'Got to Believe' and I liked that movie. *Iba ang* style *no'n* from the usual. First time *yata yun sa Pilipinas na nagkaroon ng* magic realism elements *sa isang* film *na matino ang labas.*

"She succeeded in making the film different but still *masa*. And the script was witty *dahil maganda ang pagka*-deliver, *hindi* corny. *Maganda din ang* acting—funny *pero hindi* over. *Tapos maayos ang* flow *ng* movie—*makikita mo ang* transitions. *Di na lang basta mag*-jump into a completely different scene and emotion."

Opinions

"I like Marilou Diaz-Abaya *kasi ang tapang niya!* She stands up for what she believes, and you can see that not only in her films, but also in her opinions. I really admired her for her stand on that issue about the so-called demand for *bomba* movies. *Sinabi niya kung ano yung talagang nangyari, ine*-expose *niya yung mga maduduming katotohanan ng* entertainment industry.

"*Matapang din siya pagdating sa mga pelikula niya. Sa* 'Bagong Buwan,' for example, *kahanga-hanga na kinon*-front *niya yung usapin ng giyera sa* Mindanao. *Kahit di ako gaanong* satisfied *sa pelikulang iyon (kasi di klaro* yung statement), at least *ginagawa niya. Di siya nagpadala sa uso na puro kalaswaan na lang.*"—*Katryn Ledesma, Iloilo City.*

CHARISSE AND CARON. Classically-trained ballerinas who made the transition to more popular dance forms to keep the public interested.

Ballet dancers in Hollywood

By Behn Cervantes

HOLLYWOOD'S earliest producers were mainly East European migrants who brought along with them their European tastes and continental social ambitions. When they started making movies in California, they dreamt the American Dream but they wanted to improve on it with European culture.

Cultural flair

Therefore, great cultural forms like music, be they symphonic or operatic, were to be included in their productions, along with ballet. These would give their productions that esteemed cultural flair.

It may have been the flamboyant Florenz Ziegfeld who first included prima ballerinas along with opera star Enrico Caruso in his Broadway extravaganzas. He showcased such cultural icons along with comedians, circus acts, swimmers and whatever else caught his fancy.

The Ziegfeld Follies were further enhanced by long-legged, gorgeous chorus girls in gravity-challenging costumes and headgear. These statuesque beauties would seemingly emerge from the clouds and practically walk straight into the arms of the drooling audience.

Hollywood was not to be left behind. While glamour and sex were obvious attractions, Ziegfeld and film producers included premium cultural grace notes like ballet sequences starring the likes of Pavlova, no less.

Talent scouts

Talent scouts were sent out to search for prima ballerinas who could fulfill such daunting dancing duties. Before long, Hollywood studios employed European prima ballerinas to perform a production number or two in their musical films.

Movies like "Million Dollar Mermaid" and "Funny Girl" show that the legendary Russian prima ballerina Pavlova crowned by critics as *assoluta* was a stellar attraction in Ziegfeld's extravaganzas. To portray her in such movies, the film capital imported retired leading dancers from various renowned ballet companies to fly to Hollywood and execute excerpts from "Swan Lake" and other great ballets.

MGM musicals would regularly include a ballet sequence meant for their prima ballerina in residence, like Maria Tallchief or Marina Toumanova. Those numbers were always awesome, thus making ballet even more respected, albeit elitist in nature.

However, ballet numbers were deemed as the icing on the cake and none of the ballerinas became stars from executing only classical dance pieces. Dancing stars like Cyd Charisse and Leslie Caron may have had ballet training but they branched out to do jazz and other popular dance forms to keep the public interested.

While Cyd is remembered for "Band Wagon," "Brigadoon" and other great MGM musicals and Caron for "An American in Paris" and "Gigi," in time, both ballerinas also essayed dramatic roles to keep in step with the Hollywood mood.

Play

Audrey Hepburn had ballet training, too, and was in fact a member of one of London's leading ballet companies before French playwright Collete handpicked her for the play "Gigi." Despite her dance background, Hepburn did only one musical, "Funny Face," with Fred Astaire.

Instead, Audrey established herself a fine actress and comedienne after her auspicious Hollywood debut in "Roman Holiday." The Gregory Peck starrer earned her an Academy Award. Her ballet training was apparent in her elegance and silhouette, ever classy, graceful and doe-like in stance.

There were those who didn't do as well, however. Finnish dance import Taina Elg was often relegated to friend-of-the-star roles or the attending slave of the leading lady. She nevertheless was a regular presence in many MGM movies.

Perseverance

Her perseverance paid off when she finally appeared as one of the three chorus girls (the great Kay Kendall and Mitzi Gaynor being the two others) in "Les Girls," the stylish comedy by George Cukor starring Gene Kelly. Otherwise, Elg often shadowed the leading lady, albeit with grace and aplomb.

Times have changed and grand musicals have gone out of fashion, and along with them their great ballet numbers. But they remain wonderful memories, and whenever excerpts are shown, some of these stand out as enduring classics of both dance and cinema.

'Kool Iskul' goes on a 'Field Trip' starting Jan. 25

By Nestor U. Torre

ON Jan. 25, "Kool Iskul," the educational TV program in Cebuano that reaches young viewers in the Visayas and Mindanao, starts its second year of telecasting from its home base in Cagayan de Oro City. It will be telecast every Saturday at 10 a.m. on COC TV 39.

"Kool Iskul" is produced by Mrs. Lourdes "Bing" de la Llana Pimentel, the composer-wife of Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr., in cooperation with Banko Filipino.

Lessons

During its first year, the show had a classroom orientation, with lessons in English, Science, Math, Values and other areas for Grade 5 and 6 students.

This season, the thrust is learning from the world outside the classroom. Thus, the 2003 edition of the show has a "Field Trip" format, enabling young viewers in the Philippine South to see and experience places, events and people that they would otherwise not be able to be experience, from a Visayan point of view.

Thus, the first three episodes of the new season of "Kool Iskul" take young viewers to the Senate building in Manila, where they are given a very informative and insightful tour of the session hall, Senate museum and other key areas.

Exclusive tour

The exclusive tour is conducted by no less than Senator Pimentel himself, so it is a truly personal visit that is made especially interesting and inspiring for young viewers.

Senator Pimentel is a strong supporter of "Kool Iskul" because he believes in the use of television and radio to open up the Philippine south to modern inputs.

The youth top his agenda because they will determine the future progress of the country. And he particularly likes the fact that the show is being done in Cebuano, because he comes from Mindanao, where it is one of the predominant languages.

Segment producers

"Kool Iskul" is hosted by Jewel Pimentel, Andy Bais and Rito Asilo, who are also the show's segment producers. The fact that the show has a compact production team enables it to tape in many different parts of the country on short notice.

The associate director of "Kool Iskul" is Pat Perez, who also directs the popular and prizewinning "Digital LG Quiz" show on GMA-7.

In addition to the opening episodes' special tour of the Senate, they also take viewers in the south to Museo Pambata, the Rizal Park and Intramuros complex, the National Museum, Casa Manila, and behind the scenes during the exciting grand finals of the "Digital LG Quiz" show.

Future episodes include features on to Enchanted Kingdom, Malacañang Palace, the Aguinaldo Theater for a behind-the-scenes view of Bing Pimentel's recent symphonic concert, the cultural projects of Manila Councilor Lou Veloso, and performing arts presentations in Metro Manila.

PIMENTEL. Believes in the use of television and radio to open up the Philippine south to modern inputs.

Mel Tiangco hosts 'Magpakailanman'

By Jocelyn Valle

"SINCE July, GMA-7 has been thinking of producing a feel-good program that will talk about real people and how they were able to overcome difficulties in their lives," says the network's vice president for entertainment, Wilma Galvante.

Formal offer

She adds that they had only one person in mind to host it: Mel Tiangco. But it was only when everything was finalized that Galvante formally offered the job to the veteran broadcast journalist.

"I'd been hearing about the project from other people," Mel pipes in. "*Pero hindi ko talaga alam na kasali ako.*"

"May taping sked *na kami at hindi na siya makatanggi, kasi plantsado na rin namin ang* sked *niya*," Wilma quips.

Well, it helps that Mel believes in the premise of the project, which is now known as the Wednesday-night family drama "Magpakailanman." In her many years in public service, Mel has met a lot people suffering from various afflictions. She feels that their stories should be told to show how the human spirit triumphs.

TIANGCO. Has crossed over from news to a drama show.

Pilot episode

For "Magpakailanman's" pilot episode, the subject was former sexy singer Didith Reyes—her rise to fame, her downfall, how she lost her son and in the end how she got him and her life back.

Next in line was the story of an Aeta girl who aims to be the first lawyer in her tribe. She's completed her law studies and, with the assistance of GMA-7, she's taking review classes to prepare her for the bar exams.

Mel observes that, compared to other cultures, Filipinos cope with problems because we find support in our extended families. When she gave birth to her younger child Melanie, she recalls, she wasn't only breastfeeding her baby, but also the infant child of her neighbor and best friend Vicky.

"She didn't have any milk and I had lots," she explains.

What if "Magpakailanman" would do an episode on its host—which part of Mel's life would be the focus of the teleplay? Without skipping a beat, Mel cites her bitter parting of ways with ABS-CBN.

Career

"*Akala ko* at that time, *tapos na ang* career *ko*," she intimates. "But deep inside, I knew *wala akong pagkukulang. Kapag kabutihan ang ibinigay mo, buo ang loob mo. Malaki ang problema ko,* but I was still in control of my life."

Working in a new network also opened new doors for Mel. Her talk show with Jay Sonza continues to rate. She's the first woman in the country to solo-anchor a news telecast, "Frontpage: Ulat ni Mel Tiangco."

And now, her crossover to the entertainment department. "It's no joke doing the show, with all of its requirements," she points out. "*Naninibago ako* because my professional life has been regimented. But I'm learning again, meeting new people, going to new places. *Nakakabata*!"

Moscow's mid-winter film festival opens

By Bernard Besserglik

MOSCOW—Numbing Arctic temperatures were no deterrent to Moscow moviegoers turning out for their annual festival of love in a cold climate, the mid-winter "Faces of Love" film festival which opened on Monday.

Sensible clothes

Snow was falling as the crowds, a few in formal dress but most in sensible clothes appropriate to the season, arrived for the curtain-raiser, Daniele Thompson's "Decalage Horaire" (Jet Lag), a light romantic comedy starring Jean Reno and Juliette Binoche.

Sixteen countries are represented in the 19 films in competition, but the cultures of several other nations will also be featured as the predominant theme of the entries is love crossing borders, festival program director Sergei Lavrentiev said.

A Chinese policeman in Vienna falls in love with an Austrian colleague's daughter, an exiled Serbian musician moves in with a Norwegian writer, an Arab woman takes a shine to a Russian Jew: borders and barriers count for little in Lavrentiev's selection.

"I didn't choose the films with that in mind, but that was the theme that emerged when I'd made my choice," Lavrentiev said.

The "Faces of Love" festival was launched in 1996, its mid-January timing chosen to position it half-way between successive editions of the better-known Moscow Film Festival which takes place in the summer.

Opportunity

It also gives Moscow film lovers the opportunity to sample, at easily affordable prices, a selection of world cinema, a welcome change from the standard fare of dubbed versions of mainstream US money-makers.

The festival's opening date on the eve of the Russia's "old" (Orthodox) new year means that it invariably takes place against a background of knee-deep snow and sub-zero temperatures.

The films bidding to warm the cockles—though happy endings are far from guaranteed—come from Europe and Asia, with two from the United States.

In Europe the Nordic countries are favored, with offerings from Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway, while the former Yugoslavia has three (Croatia,Serbia and Slovenia).

South Korea presents two films, and China, Iran, Israel and Thailand one each.

The biggest crowd-pleaser is likely to be "Far From Heaven," Todd Haynes's homage to the Douglas Sirk romantic melodramas of the 1950s which has scored a massive success in the United States since its release last November.

In Lavrentiev's view, other must-see movies include "Oasis," by South Korea's Lee Chang-Dong and the latest offering from the resurgent Iranian cinema, Rassul Sadr-Ameli's "I'm Taraneh, 15." *AFP*

Oscar season gets into full swing in Hollywood

BEVERLY HILLS—Hollywood's annual race toward the Academy Awards got into full swing Friday when ballots were mailed to voters who will pick the nominees for this year's Oscar statuettes.

NICHOLSON. Likely Best Actor nominee for his performance in "About Schmidt."

Voting slips

Officials of Oscar organizers, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, tabulated and mailed the voting slips to the 5,816 Academy members who will select the 2003 nominees for cinema's most prestigious prize.

The ballot papers were checked by specially-assigned accountants from the firm Pricewaterhouse Coopers to ensure they were fair and accurate before being handed over to postal officials in Beverly Hills, officials said.

"Pricewaterhouse Coopers has been tabulating the Oscar ballots since 1936," said company partner Greg Garrison who overseas the complex voting process each year.

"We take the balloting seriously, so we review our procedures every year to maintain the integrity and high standards that the Academy expects," he added.

Frenzied speculation

This year's nominations will be formally announced here on Feb. 11, putting to an end to the already frenzied speculation and industry "buzz" surrounding which movies are leading contenders for Oscar nods.

Tinseltown studios traditionally release a battery of new movies in the last week of the year to ensure that they qualify for Oscar nominations for that year, while keeping them fresh in the minds of Academy voters.

The habit means that a staggering flurry of films hits the screens simultaneously, sparking wide and conflicting expert speculation on which the hot potential Oscar winners will be.

This year, the most talked-about films are the elaborate musical "Chicago," starring Catherine Zeta Jones, Richard Gere and Renee Zellweger, "About Schmidt" starring Jack Nicholson and Martin Scorcese's new period film "Gangs of New York." Also featured among the hot favorites this year are "The Hours," the wrenching tale of three women based on the life and work of novelist Virginia Woolf and the fantasy spectacular "Lord of the Rings: The two Towers." The awards ceremony, which marks the climax of the cinematic year and of Hollywood's awards season, will take place in Hollywood on March 23. *AFP*

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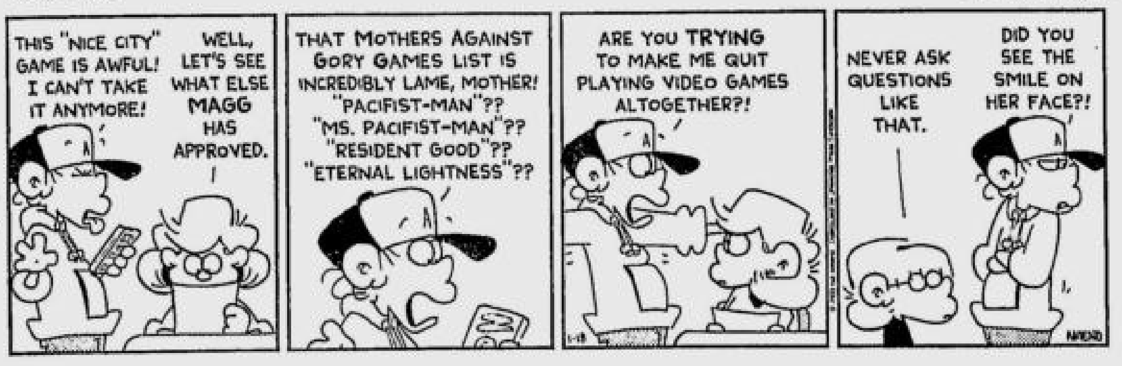
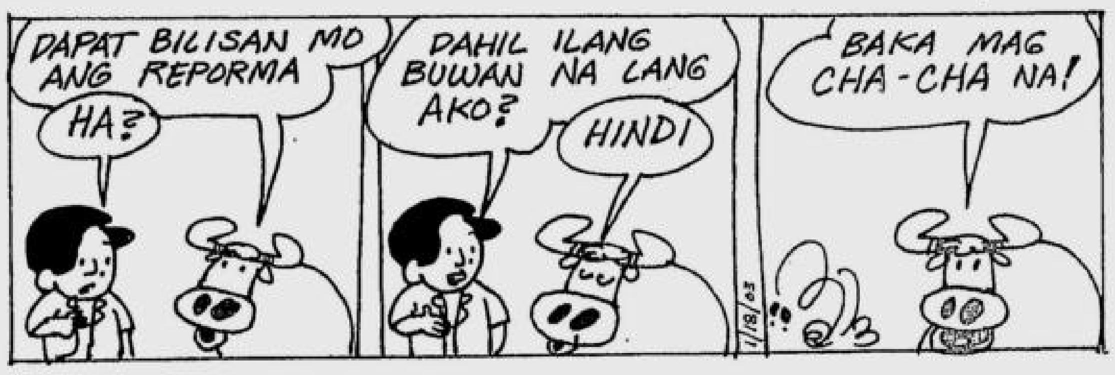
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


THIS "NICE CITY" GAME IS AWFUL! I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!
WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT ELSE MAGG HAS APPROVED.
THAT MOTHERS AGAINST GORY GAMES LIST IS INCREDIBLY LAME, MOTHER! "PACIFIST-MAN"?? "MS. PACIFIST-MAN"?? "RESIDENT GOOD"?? "ETERNAL LIGHTNESS"??
ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE ME QUIT PLAYING VIDEO GAMES ALTOGETHER?!
NEVER ASK QUESTIONS LIKE THAT.
DID YOU SEE THE SMILE ON HER FACE?!
1-18
AMEND

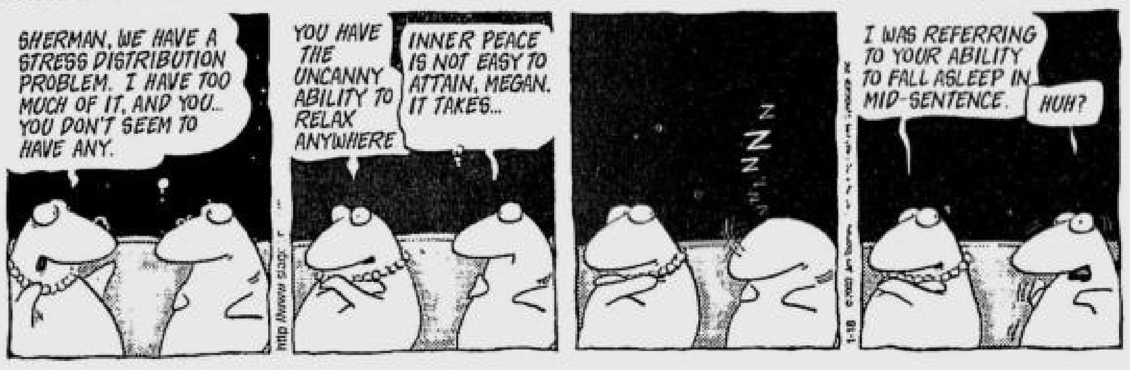
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DAPAT BILISAN MO ANG REPORMA
HA?
DAHIL ILANG BUWAN NA LANG AKO?
HINDI
1/18/03
BAKA MAG CHA-CHA NA!

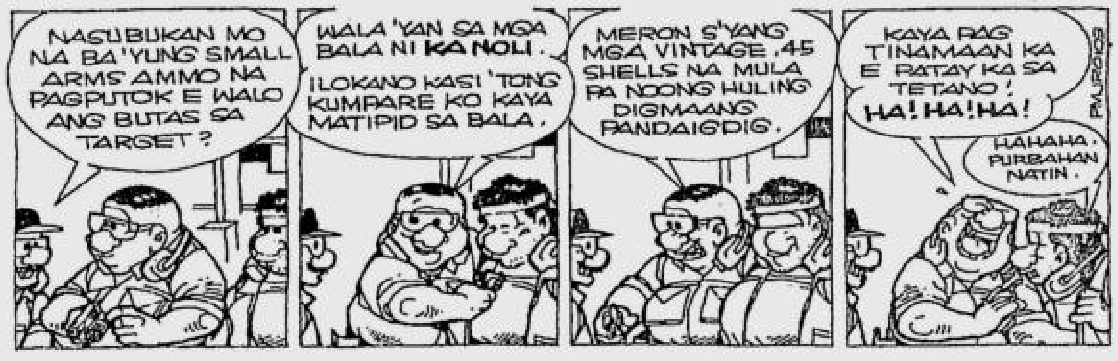
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SHERMAN, WE HAVE A STRESS DISTRIBUTION PROBLEM. I HAVE TOO MUCH OF IT, AND YOU... YOU DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY.
YOU HAVE THE UNCANNY ABILITY TO RELAX ANYWHERE
INNER PEACE IS NOT EASY TO ATTAIN, MEGAN. IT TAKES...
Z Z Z
I WAS REFERRING TO YOUR ABILITY TO FALL ASLEEP IN MID-SENTENCE.
HUH?
1-18

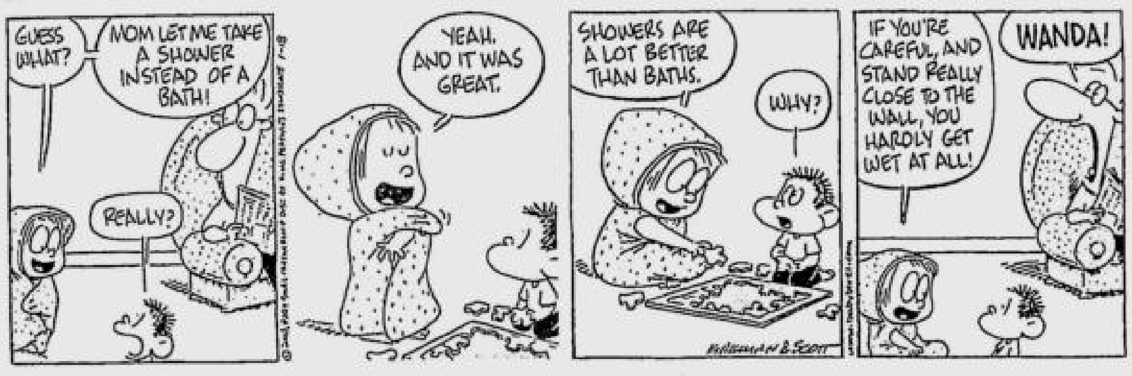
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NASUBUKAN MO NA BA 'YUNG SMALL ARMS AMMO NA PAGPUTOK E WALO ANG BUTAS SA TARGET?
WALA 'YAN SA MGA BALA NI KA NOLI.
ILOKANO KASI 'TONG KUMPARE KO KAYA MATIPID SA BALA.
MERON S'YANG MGA VINTAGE .45 SHELLS NA MULA PA NOONG HULING DIGMAANG PANDAIGDIG.
KAYA PAG TINAMAAN KA E PATAY KA SA TETANO! HA! HA! HA!
HAHAHA. PURBAHAN NATIN.
PMJR2003

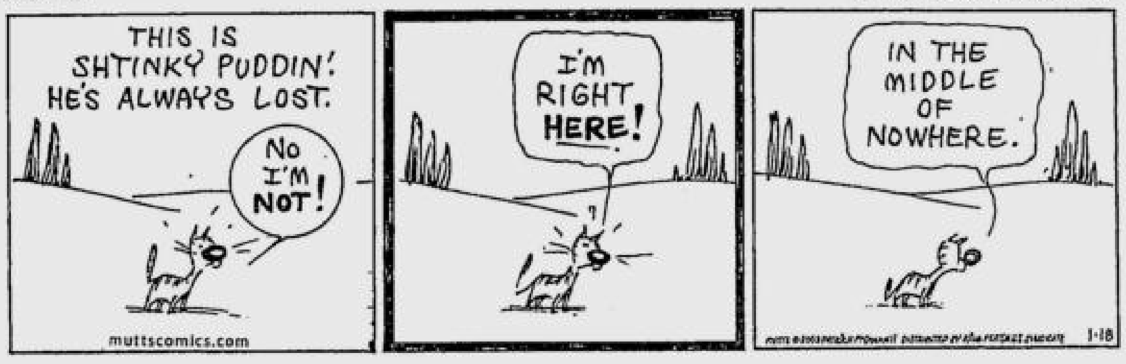
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


GUESS WHAT?
MOM LET ME TAKE A SHOWER INSTEAD OF A BATH!
REALLY?
YEAH. AND IT WAS GREAT.
SHOWERS ARE A LOT BETTER THAN BATHS.
WHY?
IF YOU'RE CAREFUL, AND STAND REALLY CLOSE TO THE WALL, YOU HARDLY GET WET AT ALL!
WANDA!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

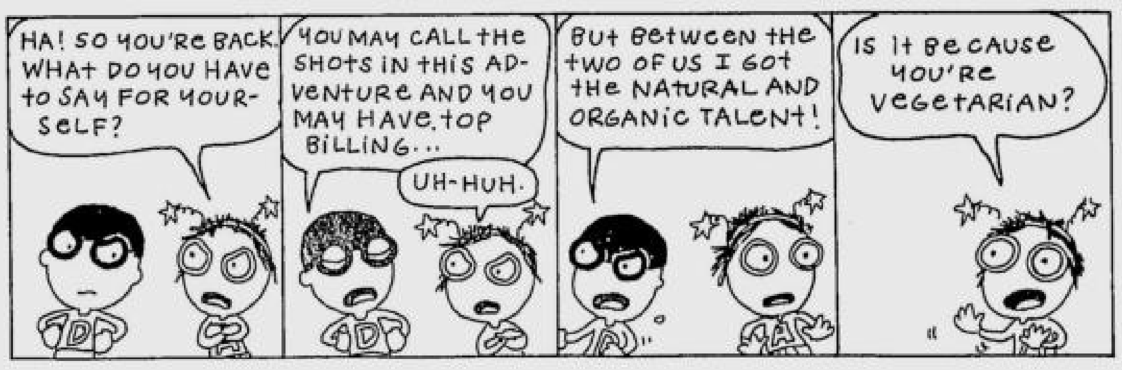
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS SHTINKY PUDDIN'. HE'S ALWAYS LOST.
NO I'M NOT!
muttscomics.com
I'M RIGHT HERE!
IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE.
1-18

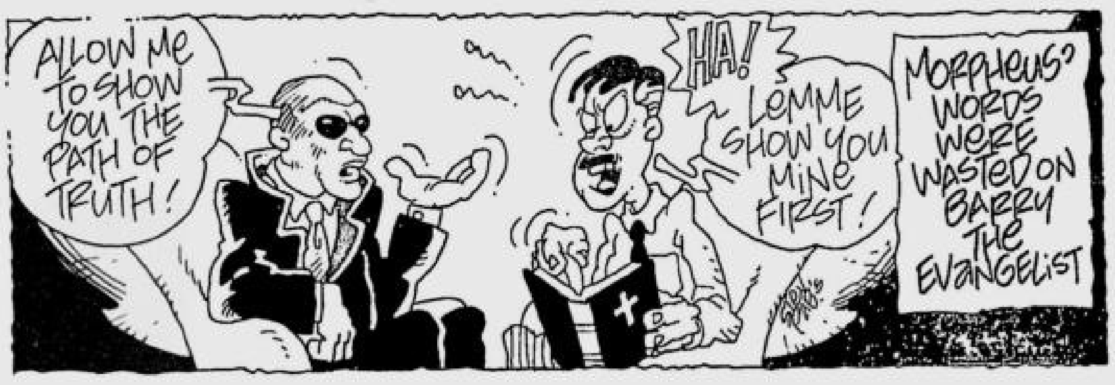
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BYLYRA GARCELLANO


HA! SO YOU'RE BACK. WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?
YOU MAY CALL THE SHOTS IN THIS ADVENTURE AND YOU MAY HAVE TOP BILLING...
UH-HUH.
BUT BETWEEN THE TWO OF US I GOT THE NATURAL AND ORGANIC TALENT!
IS IT BECAUSE YOU'RE VEGETARIAN?

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ALLOW ME TO SHOW YOU THE PATH OF TRUTH!
HA!
LEMME SHOW YOU MINE FIRST!
MORPHEUS' WORDS WERE WASTED ON BARRY THE EVANGELIST

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Cary Grant, Kevin Costner, Bobby Goldsboro, Jonathan Davis

Happy Birthday: It's time to clear your decks and make room for the changes you see fit. Your popularity will mount as you take the initiative to do things right. You will be inquisitive, you'll feel good about yourself and you will fulfill your desires. Your numbers are 9, 16, 24, 26, 33, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Make plans to do things that will be energetic and stimulating. Include friends who are less popular in your activities and you will gain some valuable allies.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be careful today in how you deal with those around you. By listening and empowering the people you care about, you will make the best personal gains of all.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Do not make promises you won't be able to keep. The disappointment you cause others will come back to haunt you when you want a favor in return.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will find yourself stressed out and impatient if you allow your family or anyone else to lean on you today. Organize your day well to avoid opposition and unnecessary delays.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Consider inviting friends over. You may like to be the center of attention, but you don't want to appear as the court jester. Entertain with dignity.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Having second thoughts about your career direction will cause some angst. Be practical and look at all your options before making a decision. Expand your knowledge.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Keep a close eye on your assets and those you love. Children and financial matters may cause worry and limitations. You must not take on too many projects.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will find it difficult to control your emotions today. Don't let jealousy take over. Channel your energy into self-improvement projects, not into changing others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You are in a learning cycle and you don't want to miss a thing. Check out subjects that will help you further your goals. Talking to people who come from different backgrounds will add to your knowledge.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Offer your help to family and friends who can't take care of their personal papers and accounting needs. You will be rewarded for your actions if you are understanding and patient.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It will be difficult to understand everything that is going on around you today. Don't prejudge. Find out all there is to know first, and don't pick sides.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will excel if you get involved in competitive games or intellectual debates today. Don't back down due to fear. Believe in yourself.

Birthday Baby: You will be unpredictable, but lots of fun. You will never back down and you will always do what you say. Due to your unique style, you will not go unnoticed.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Ticket zones
11 Show of hands
15 Animated Disney classic
16 Stratford's river
17 Went back up
18 Microscope element
19 Appendage
20 Delivered a low blow?
21 To the point
22 Stage item
24 Bear's lair
25 Mini-marathon
26 Medicinal fluid
28 Buckthorn
29 Used Ma Bell to sell
33 Lofty mountain
36 Love story
37 NASA's ISS partner
38 Accountants
41 Waterways
42 Glides high
46 Macbeth and his peers
47 Beseech
50 Thin strip of wood
51 Enthusiastic reviews
52 Even
54 Respectful address
55 Came down to earth
56 Give new life to
58 Coagulate
59 Makes a mountain out of a molehill
60 Daly of "Judging Amy"
61 Gall and wormwood

DOWN
1 Abandons
2 Coyote State capital
3 Inspire with love
4 Asner and Begley
5 Orlop or poop
6 Prevailing tendency
7 Zellweger of "Jerry Maguire"
8 Priscilla's dear John
9 Appealed
10 Dejected
11 Combining capacity
12 Give too much credit to
13 Monastic hairdos
14 Baja California seaport
21 Wild boars
23 Set
25 Mockery
27 Acts of forgiveness
28 Platitudinous talk
30 Plunders
31 Big birds Down Under
32 The human race
33 Theoretical
34 With deadly force
35 French air mail
39 "No, No, _
40 Letters in distress
43 Strasbourg's region
44 Singers John and Bonnie
45 Emphasis
47 Sire
48 Six-time U.S. Open tennis champion
49 Literary grouping
52 Son of Jacob
53 Salacious stare
56 Steal
57 Took off

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	■	11	12	13	14
15										■	16			
17										■	18			
19			■	20					■	21				
22			23	■	24			■	25					
26				27	■	■	■	28						
■	■	■	29		30	31	32							
33	34	35	■	36							■	37		
38			39								40	■	■	■
41							■	■	■	42		43	44	45
46						■	47	48	49	■	50			
51					■	52				53	■	54		
55				■	56						57			
58				■	59									
60				■	61									

By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL

1/18/03

Friday's Puzzle Solved

F	O	E	S	■	M	E	S	A	■	C	I	N	C	H
E	A	R	L	■	C	O	E	D	■	A	D	O	R	E
T	H	R	O	W	I	N	T	H	E	T	O	W	E	L
A	U	S	T	I	N	■	S	O	R	E	■	A	D	E
■	■	■	H	T	T	P	■	C	A	R	R	Y	O	N
I	A	P	S	H	O	E	S	■	S	S	E	■	■	■
A	L	A	■	I	S	T	L	E	■	■	N	A	T	O
G	I	V	E	T	H	E	O	N	C	E	O	V	E	R
S	T	E	W	■	■	S	O	D	A	S	■	I	R	A
■	■	■	E	R	G	■	P	O	P	P	E	D	I	N
A	C	T	S	O	U	T	■	W	E	I	R	■	■	■
T	O	W	■	O	R	A	L	■	F	E	N	C	E	S
P	R	I	C	K	U	P	O	N	E	S	E	A	R	S
A	G	R	E	E	■	E	N	Y	A	■	S	K	I	T
R	I	L	E	D	■	S	E	E	R	■	T	E	N	S

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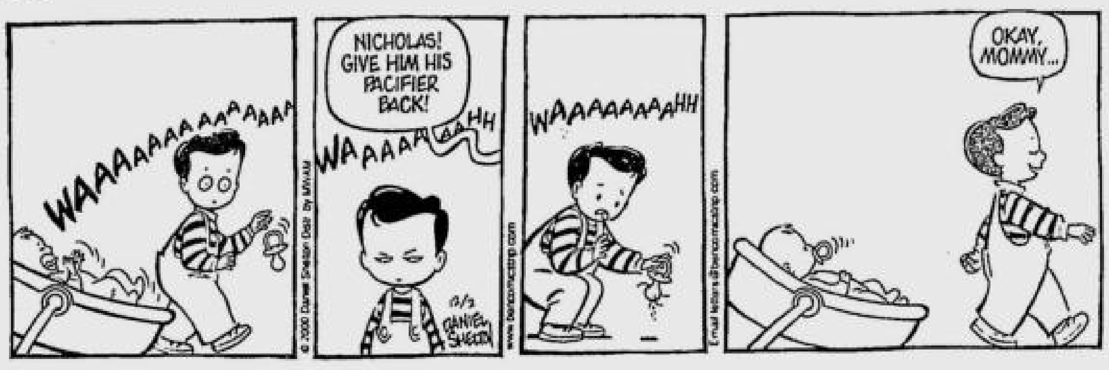
1/18/03

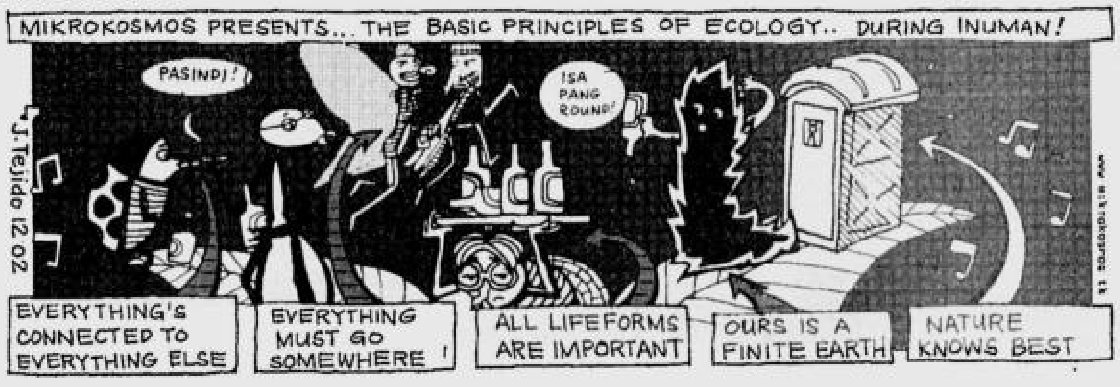
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
NICHOLAS! GIVE HIM HIS PACIFIER BACK!
WAAAAAAAAHH
WAAAAAAAAAHH
OKAY, MOMMY...
DANIEL SHELTON

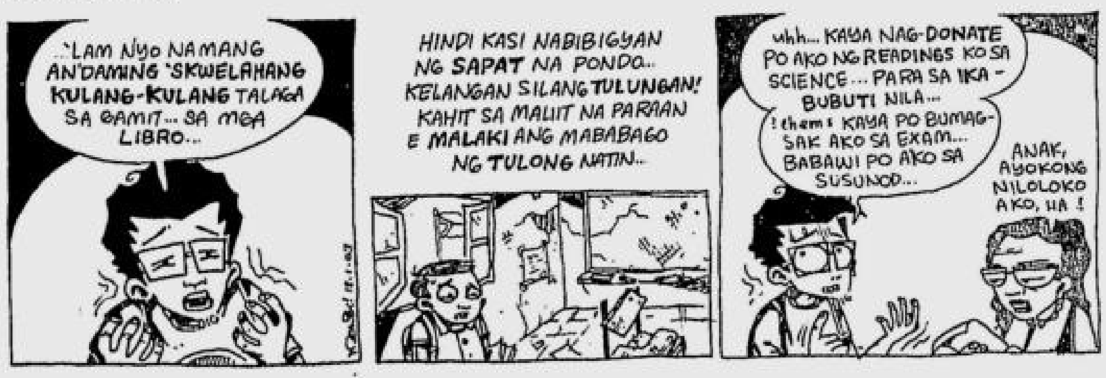
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MIKROKOSMOS PRESENTS... THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ECOLOGY.. DURING INUMAN!
PASINDI!
ISA PANG ROUND!
J. Tejido 12 02
EVERYTHING'S CONNECTED TO EVERYTHING ELSE
EVERYTHING MUST GO SOMEWHERE!
ALL LIFEFORMS ARE IMPORTANT
OURS IS A FINITE EARTH
NATURE KNOWS BEST

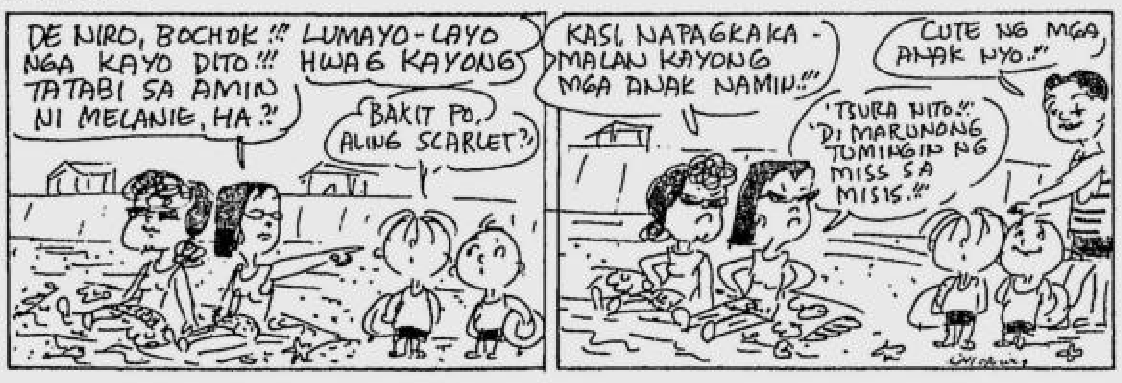
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


..'LAM NYO NAMANG AN'DAMING 'SKWELAHANG KULANG-KULANG TALAGA SA GAMIT... SA MGA LIBRO...
HINDI KASI NABIBIGYAN NG SAPAT NA PONDO.. KELANGAN SILANG TULUNGAN! KAHIT SA MALIIT NA PARAAN E MALAKI ANG MABABAGO NG TULONG NATIN..
uhh... KAYA NAG-DONATE PO AKO NG READINGS KO SA SCIENCE... PARA SA IKA-BUBUTI NILA...
!ehem! KAYA PO BUMAGSAK AKO SA EXAM... BABAWI PO AKO SA SUSUNOD...
ANAK, AYOKONG NILOLOKO AKO, HA!

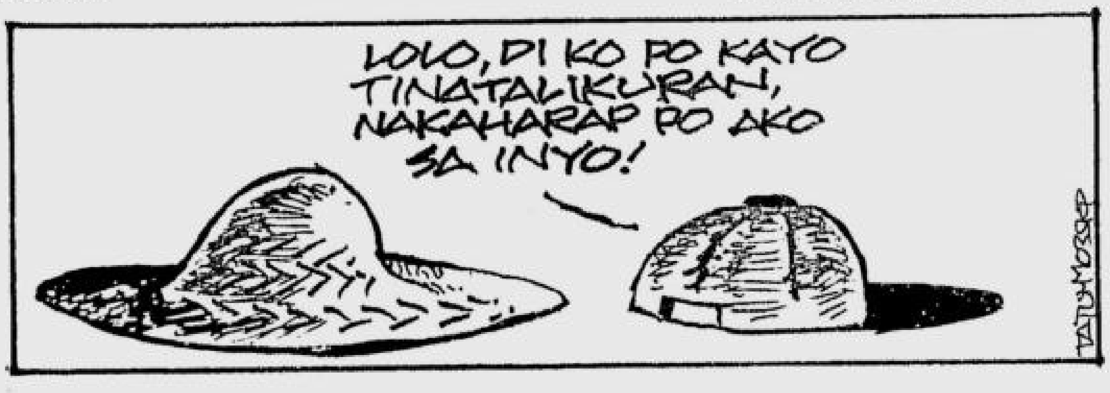
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, BOCHOK!!! NGA KAYO DITO!!! TATABI SA AMIN NI MELANIE, HA?!
LUMAYO-LAYO HWAG KAYONG
BAKIT PO, ALING SCARLET?
KASI, NAPAGKAKAMALAN KAYONG MGA ANAK NAMIN!!
CUTE NG MGA ANAK NYO.!!
'TSURA NITO!! 'DI MARUNONG TUMINGIN NG MISS SA MISIS.!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


LOLO, DI KO PO KAYO TINATALIKURAN, NAKAHARAP PO AKO SA INYO!
TATUMOSSEP

Tiya Dely honored for lifetime of work as radio counselor

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR more than 60 years now, Fidela Mendoza Magpayo has been a radio talent, starting out as an announcer and singer in 1946, and eventually finding her true calling as the host of a series of advice and counseling programs on the ether. Yes, Fidela is none other than Tiya Dely, everyone's national shoulder to cry on and local version of Dorothy Dix.

Award

At the ripe, old age of 82, Tiya Dely has been given the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas—and what a lifetime it's been!

Born in 1920, Tiya Dely first found work as a singer and actress in musical-variety shows with the legendary National Artist Atang dela Rama on radio station KZRF before World War Two. Later, she became a radio announcer on the PIAM station, and was so popular that she continued to do radio programs even during the war.

After the war ended, she moved to DZRH and was one of the first talents of local radio soap operas like "Gulong ng Palad" and "Ilaw ng Tahanan." At DZBB, she starred in "Prinsipe Amante."

First advice show

Eventually, she was given a show of her own, "Kasaysayan sa mga Liham Kay Tiya Dely," her first advice show on the air. It was this program that set Dely apart from other radio talents in the estimation of her loyal listeners.

She did other types of shows in the years that followed, but in 1990, she rejoined DZRH with a new version of her "signature" format, "Ang Inyong Lingkod, Tiya Dely."

Her advice is prized by listeners because it isn't abstract or huffily "I told you so" in orientation. It is eminently practical, down-to-earth and genuinely concerned—hence the outpouring of appreciation that she has enjoyed through the years and decades.

Senior icon

Tiya Dely has also made it a point to keep up with the times, so her advice is grounded on the here and now. How does a senior icon of 82 manage to remain so interested and connected? She finds great fulfillment in helping people.

As she so glowingly puts it, "For me, there's nothing like helping my listeners. *Kahit maliit ang problema,* it doesn't matter. As long as my listeners want me to remain their friend on the radio, I will be there for them."

It turns out that, aside from radio, Dely has also done well in other fields. At the Manila Grand Opera House, she starred in plays like "Nassan Ka, Irog?" and "Magkaibigang Putik."

Movies

She also played lead roles in movies like "Mga Liham Kay Tiya Dely," "Sebya, Mahal Kita," "Hamon sa Kampeon," "Basahang Ginto" and "Hihintayin Kita."

But it is as radio's "diamond" icon and helpmeet that Tiya Dely has made her mark. After she finally decides to retire, she will be long and fondly remembered.

Happily, however, she still has no plans to hang up her mike. What's the secret to her unabated zest and longevity in her profession? No secret, she smiles: "I just love my work—and, through the years, it's loved me back!"

MAGPAYO. Finds great fulfillment in helping people.

Music fans . . .

From page C6

have a distinct style.

"Their songs' lyrics are well thought of and always make sense. The band's members are obviously professional, and they blend with their music. They play by heart." *—Celeste Joy Cabrero, Quezon City*

"Yung dating Eraserheads, *nung si* Ely Buendia *pa ang* frontman. *Sila yung bumuhay sa* Pinoy bandmania *nung* early '90s.

Frontman

"Fresh *yung* approach *nila.* Ultraelectromagneticpop! *Halo-halo yung* music. Rock *na may* pop *na may* techno *na may kung ano-ano pang kakaibang istilo.*

"Yung subjects *ng* songs *nila* range from nonsensical everyday happenings *sa buhay ng tao* to the more serious (love, friendship, peace). *Di naman sila lantad* politically *pero meron din silang* mild commentary *at minsan may pagka-*rebellious *din. Patok na patok sila sa mga* teenagers.

"Pero ayoko na sa E-heads *ngayon kasi wala na si* Ely. *'Pag walang* Ely, *hindi na* E-heads ang tunog." *— Gabriel Wong, Cebu City*

'Chicago' is a kinetic film

By Ben Nuckols

BALTIMORE—The path from stage to screen was arduous and the director could hardly be greener, but the Broadway-spawned "Chicago" is every inch a movie. It's kinetic, dynamic and always entertaining—but also a tad chaste.

Musical vaudeville

Structured on the stage as "musical vaudeville" performed directly to the audience, "Chicago" has been reimagined as a highly subjective mind-trip seen through the eyes of Roxie Hart (Renee Zellweger), a star-struck naif who morphs into a jaded celebrity and back again.

The musical numbers unfold almost exclusively in Roxie's mind, a conceit that allows for some inspired intercutting between a pristine soundstage recreation of 1929 Chicago and an always morphing bare stage where the characters belt out tunes and strut their stuff. It's a savvy approach, and for anyone new to "Chicago" it might just be mind-blowing.

Elaborate fantasies

With the song and dance staged as elaborate fantasies, "Chicago" doesn't resemble last year's "Moulin Rouge" as much as Lars von Trier's "Dancer in the Dark." When Roxie imagines music from the ambient sounds she hears in her prison cell, we're reminded ever so briefly of Bjork's heartbreaking death-row rendition of "My Favorite Things." There's even a woman sent to the gallows, but we're encouraged to forget about it five minutes later.

The knock on "Chicago" has always been its slightness, its wisp of a story and candied ruminations on the disposability of celebrity. But choreographer Bob Fosse—and in the thrilling 1996 revival, Ann Reinking—brought to it such a hypercharged sensuality that you were drawn in further than you felt was possible. The cast did things with simple wooden chairs that seemed to beg for a raid from the vice squad.

No carnal edge

The cinematic "Chicago" doesn't have that carnal edge—partly because Rob Marshall, a longtime choreographer who has worked almost exclusively in the theater, does such a good job as a movie director. With Marshall's crisp, propulsive editing rhythm, the choreography hardly stands a chance. Nobody dances more than a few steps in a single shot. AP

ZELLWEGER. The film is a highly subjective mind-trip seen through her character's eyes.

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January 1 - 20	January 20, 2003	January 25, 2003	Magandang Tanghali Bayan
Jan. 21 - Feb. 20	February 20, 2003	February 25, 2003	Ok Fine Whatever
Feb. 21 - March 20	March 20, 2003	March 25, 2003	Ok Fine Whatever

2. The non-winning entries of the previous months' draws will no longer be included in the succeeding monthly draws.
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Sundance filmfest marked by star vehicles and diversity

By James Joseph

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah—A quiver of independent movies that either star or are directed by top Hollywood stars are set to steal the spotlight at this year's Sundance Film Festival.

Hollywood heavyweights

Hollywood heavyweights such as Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman, Mel Gibson, Billy Bob Thornton and Morgan Freeman and Kevin Spacey headline some of the films debuting at the world's top independent movie festival this year.

Stars such as Matt Dillon and Salma Hayek will also feature, but this time behind the camera, making their directorial debuts.

But, while the movies boasting star talent are likely to help persuade Tinseltown moguls to dig deep into their pockets, Sundance will also boast its usual eclectic array of small independent movies.

In fact, if there is any theme at all to this year's festival, which began Thursday in the snow-besieged ski resort of Park City, Utah, it might just be the sheer diversity among the 124 films being showcased, organizers say.

Originality

"There's a lot freshness and originality in the festival this year," said festival director Geoffrey Gilmore.

"In some ways, the kinds of films that are being made these days are so individually fueled and almost idiosyncratically passionate (because of) the creative voices of their makers (that) it's hard to unify them," Gilmore said.

He and his staff selected 124 feature-length documentary and dramatic films, 60 shorts and 26 foreign movies from the more than 3,000 cinematic submissions they received.

The festival is a major cinematic event these days and is closely scrutinized by top moviemakers who swarm to Park City hoping to win rights to a small movie that could become Hollywood's next big thing.

PACINO, HOFFMAN AND GIBSON. Topbill some of the movies showing in this year's festival.

But when screen icon Robert Redford launched it 22 years ago as a small affair that gave non-mainstream filmmakers a rare forum at which to exhibit their work, it was ruthlessly shunned by Tinseltown.

Now movie moguls go to Park City in force in search of commercial gems like Steven Soderbergh's 1989 smash hit "Sex, Lies and Videotape" or 2002 best picture Oscar nominee "In The Bedroom," both of which premiered at Sundance.

The festival was launched with the premiere of "Levity," the simmering story of a man leaving prison after 20 years behind bars as he finds his way in the outside world and seeks redemption for a murder.

Screenwriter

The film stars Hollywood heavyweights Billy Bob Thornton, Morgan Freeman, Holly Hunter and Kirsten Dunst and is directed by screenwriter Ed Solomon.

" 'Levity' is an exceptional work," Gilmore said adding that the picture was driven by Solomon's strong script and characters. "He's a filmmaker I'm sure we'll hear from," said Gilmore.

Marking her debut as a director, Hayek's "The Maldonado Miracle," tells the story of an 11-year-old boy who accidentally creates a religious "miracle," testing the faith of a small town.

Dillon's "City of Ghosts," starring James Caan and Gerard Depardieu, deals with a scamster who bites off more than he can chew when he goes to Cambodia to get his share of a con job.

Movie insiders are already taking about Wayne Kramer's "The Cooler," starring William H. Macy, Alec Baldwin and Maria Bello in the story of a clean-cut young man sent in by the mafia to run a casino.

Ruthless killer

Also the subject of "buzz" this year are "Pieces of April," directed by Peter Hedges, the story of a woman trying to salvage her ties with her family, as is "Party Monster," starring former "Home Alone" kid Macaulay Culkin as a ruthless killer.

Despite growing criticism that Sundance is getting too big and too mainstream, Gilmore said this year's festival would achieve a good balance with "just the right amount" of growth.

"I think we have a pretty strong rein on it," said Gilmore. "We've allowed growth to occur, but not beyond the capacity of Park City to absorb the audience that comes." The curtain descends Jan. 26 and the festival is expected to draw around 20,000 moviegoers.

AFP

Bibsy Carballo gets her high from helping performers endure

By Andy P. Bais

WHAT do Dawn Zulueta and Gretchen Barretto have in common aside from having powerful men in business for partners and at the same time enjoying their domesticated bliss? The answer? They once had Bibsy Carballo for their manager.

Close association

Bibsy has been managing show biz talents for more that 20 years. She was drawn into the profession through her close association with the late ace director Lino Brocka and the Laurels—Celia Diaz and son Cocoy.

The erstwhile St. Theresa's College teacher served as publicist for the Laurels and Lino's theater productions at Peta. When her clients started making movies—Lino as director and Cocoy as actor—Bibsy became a talent manager.

Actor Michael de Mesa was her first talent. Although there was hesitation at first, she eventually gave talent management a try. "After that, it just sort of snowballed. Talent management was new then, So I had to learn all about it as I went along, because there was nobody around to tell me, " she narrates.

How was talent managing then? "Before, managers didn't have to work as hard as now, because there was lots of work. We used to make about 300 movies a year as compared to 80 or so at present. So, we now have more actors vying for the same role.

"But what I've learned is, if an actor is good, he's gonna get it. He doesn't have to be a star, he just have to be good!" she says.

Jobs

As a manager, Bibsy looks for jobs for her talents and, in some cases, initiates projects for them.

However, she emphasizes that she doesn't look for projects for a particular actor. "I'll find out who's cooking up something and then ask about the story, who's going to fit the role, and from the roles available, I recommend," she explains.

Bibsy relates that, thus far, she had handled only two big stars, Dawn and Gretchen; the rest are mostly supporting actors. The highest number of talents she ever had was 30 and at present, she's down to 10 active ones. She also books talents, particularly those without a manager. These are mostly theater people like Ronnie Lazaro, Ces Quesada and Adriana Agcaoili.

She clarifies that she's not consciously shying away from managing big-name stars: "For instance, Jackielou Blanco used to get lead roles. So, it's not a conscious shift. Rather, the time and the demand are the determining factors. Boots Anson-Roa was a star. Now, she does supporting roles. *Ganun lang naman yun, e.*"

CARBALLO (third from left) with Ricky and Jackielou Davao and their children, and singer Anna Fegi (second from left).

Bibsy considers herself lucky with her present stable of talents. She hasn't encountered any problem in dealing with them, primarily because she lays down the ground rules during their first meeting.

"First, I'll find out *bakit niya pinasok ang trabahong ito.* And if the talent says *dahil maganda ang pera, ayoko sa kanya. Dapat ang* number one reason *dahil gusto niya ang trabaho.*

Discipline

"He must also have discipline. When a talent accepts something, he should do his homework, *pinag-aralan niya ang dapat niyang gawin.* That's why, if you choose the right people, *wala talagang problema.* Luckily, most of my talents are like that," she explains.

Bibsy describes her job as "financially rewarding if you have a big star as talent. Otherwise, there's so much effort involved." In her case, she doesn't have much trouble because her talents are very responsible.

The manager, according to Bibsy, is the frontliner, the one who absorbs everything, and is always the bad person. "For instance, a movie producer tells my talent that he has a project *na bagay sa kanya;*, agree *agad ang* talent *ko.* Actually, *napapangitan siya sa* role *at sasabihin niya sa akin. Siyempre,* I will be the one to tell the producer *na, sa tingin ko, di bagay yung* project *sa* talent *ko.* So, I am the bad person," she sighs.

Not upfront

When asked to comment on why manager-talent relationship turns sour, Bibsy has this to say: "That usually happens when they are not upfront, when they are not absolutely honest with each other. If a talent no longer feels comfortable with me, we sit down and talk about it. If you're honest with each other, the parting of ways need not be painful."

Bibsy is also managing singers and she's mighty proud of her latest protege, Anna Fegi, whom she describes as a hard worker and has the right attitude. She is certain that, starting next year, Anna's star will shine the brightest.

Prized talent

She has succeeded in drumbeating her prized talent into the national consciousness through various live performances all over the country. Anna has also appeared on various television shows and has cut an album for BMG Records. She needs a hit, though. Next in Bibsy's plan is for Anna to penetrate the international scene.

One other talent Bibsy speaks highly of is Ricky Davao. "Everybody was telling me, *bakit ko daw siya pinagtiya-tiyagaan, wala naman daw mangyayari sa kanya.* But I knew that he was good. *Puwedeng hindi siya* big star, *pero may* longevity *siya, parang* Eddie Garcia. And look, it's happening.

"I get my high from helping performers endure. That's fulfillment for me, and when it happens, *ang sarap!*" she smiles.

Music fans select the best local alternative bands

By Noelani Torre

THERE is no clear-cut, all-encompassing definition for the music genre dubbed "alternative." In the simplest sense, what is alternative is the opposite of mainstream, "pop" music. Still, a number of groups classified as alternative are in truth as popular as their pop counterparts.

Sub-genres

Alternative music in the American context is linked with punk, grunge, classic rock, techno, etc. Think Nirvana, The Clash, REM, Pearl Jam, and so on. It has many sub-genres, which include indie rock, alternative country, punk rock, gothic, industrial, emo, and something called shoegazer.

Nowadays, alternative music is an umbrella term used to describe whatever new, rockish, unclassifiable music increasingly innovative musicians come up with.

In the Philippines, according to Joey Ayala (whose music is usually classified under that category), alternative music refers to songs "that address contemporary issues and topics" and/or "contain substantial indigenous elements" and/or anything the listener thinks is not mainstream or "pop-ular." So, in effect, it's the listener himself who defines what is or isn't alternative.

Curious about what listeners consider alternative, we asked several local music devotees to tell us which Pinoy alternative group they liked best. Here are some of their favorite bands and their reasons for their choices:

Songs that make sense

"Barbie's Cradle. I like most of their songs mainly because they make sense. They don't just sing about love, but about everything that goes on in life.

"One of my favorite songs is 'Money For Food.' It's catchy and has a strong political message. They have a lot of social commentary.

"I also like it that they're religious—they're not druggies who go wild for no reason. Their vocalist, Barbie, is a woman and it's rare for women to succeed in what is still a male-dominated area.

BARBIE'S CRADLE. Strong political message.

"She is a versatile musician, she not only sings but also plays other instruments like keyboards and guitar. And she can really sing, *hindi lang pang*-headbang *ang* boses *niya.*

"Their music has many layers so it's not boring, and it's definitely not manufactured music." *—Kring Anilop, U.P. Village*

Teenagers

"Parokya ni Edgar. *Maraming nakaka*-relate *sa mga kanta nila kahit puro 'kalokohan,' kasi totoo din naman ang mga kinakanta nila. Kagaya ng 'Halaga,' 'Buloy,' at 'Silvertoes' na tungkol sa mga nangyayari sa buhay ng isang taong nakatira sa Pilipinas*—usually *mga* teenagers. Super *kalokohan, pero Pinoy na Pinoy. Mamamatay ka sa kakatawa.*

"Madaling kantahin ang mga kanta nila. Kahit sintunado ka, makakasabay ka pa rin, kaya marami talagang na-a-attract sa kanila. Catchy *din ang mga* album concepts *nila.* Title *pa lang kakaiba na*—'Burugudunstuys-tugudunstuy.' Cute.

*"Magaling sila mag-*market *ng sarili nila. Marami silang mga* gimmicks *na nakakaakit ng* audience.*" —Anjo Decena, Hagonoy, Bulacan*

Rebellious

"My favorite local alternative band is Yano. They are basically rebellious—against music and society's traditions. Most bands usually sing about things that are in accordance with the majority's beliefs. They do that so they will sell. Yano is courageous enough to expose what is right, or the truth.

"Their songs sometimes have a cathartic effect, especially when you are frustrated about the things happening in the country.

"The lyrics are simple, *pero mabigat ang laman,* like in 'Banal na Aso.' I like to think that a lot of people I hate, hate them. Because the people I hate are hypocrites like the *banal na asos* and *santong kabayos* in the song." *— Steve Gayosa, Tacloban City*

Classic rock

"Wolfgang. Even though they've just disbanded, a lot of people still listen to their songs, and they're still being played. Their sound is mainly classic rock and they stand out because of that. Once you hear a song of theirs, you'll instantly know it's theirs because they

MUSIC/C5

Focus on SSPE

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

(Conclusion)

MEASLES should be widely feared because of complications such as these:

- Measles causes ear infections in nearly one out of every 10 children who get it.
- As many as one out of 20 children with measles get pneumonia.
- About one child in 1,000 who get measles will develop encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain that can lead to convulsions and leave the child deaf or mentally retarded.
- For every 1,000 children who get measles, one or two will die.
- Measles can also make a pregnant woman have a miscarriage, give birth prematurely, or have a baby with low birth weight.
- In developing countries, measles have been known to kill as many as one out of four people.
- It is the leading cause of blindness among African children.
- Measles kill almost one million children in the world each year.

Manifestations of SSPE

- Physical signs are few until the disease is well advanced.
- Subtlé behavioral changes.
- Mounting difficulty in school.
- Disease progresses; behavior becomes bizarre.
- Rhythmic (myoclonic) jerking of the body every few seconds; seizures and abnormal gait (cerebellar ataxia).
- Patients may be rigid or flaccid.
- Person eventually develops dementia, stupor.
- Coma before death.

Prognosis

Affected individuals generally succumb one to two years after diagnosis, but some may survive for longer periods with supportive therapy, including medication.

Prevention

Immunization against measles is the only known prevention for SSPE.

The SSPE Children Care Foundation Inc. would like to thank the Good Samaritans on behalf of John Carlo Mituda, 11, our new patient, and PGH doctors, Dr. Aida Salonga, Chair, Section of Pediatric Neurology, Department of Neuro Sciences and Dr. Bernie Chua, who diagnosed John Carlo as SSPE Stage I.

Deposits directly credited to the SSPE Children Care Foundation, Inc. C/A No. 0291-0369-96 at the BPI Forbes Park branch: P2,500 from BPI Aguirre branch, P1,000-North Greenhils, P300-Anita Ang, San Pedro Laguna, P500-San Fernando Highway, P1,000-main branch, P1,000-Iloilo 12-Nart, P2,000-Buendia Pasong Tamo, P300-Araneta ave., P450, P5,000-Serge Abcede, P1,000-Angeles main, P2,000-West Triangle, QC, P2,000-Greenhills Shopping Center, P5,000-Laguna Techno Park EPZA, P6,000-West ave., P2,000-Bert Basillo, P30,000-anonymous, P1,000-Clenia Dimanche from the church of Holy Trinity, P10,000-Belinda Cunanan and family.

We raised P63,050 so far for John Carlo, and from the funds of the Foundation, we purchased 25 vials of (2500mg) of Intravenous Immunoglobulin or IVIG from Vizcarra Pharmaceutical, delivered to us last Dec. 27.

(Contact Mandy at 522-5185 or 89 and 5221905 or CF 0916-7060-130.)

'Nicholas Nickleby' is for viewers of all ages

By Sheila Norman-Culp

NEW YORK—What film can you take your 10-year-old to, as well as your grandmother? Where else can you start a conversation with your kids about how bad things can happen to good people, and the pluck that is needed to overcome life's challenges?

Child abuse

The answer: "Nicholas Nickleby," Charles Dickens' sprawling tale of child abuse, greed, lechery and the eternal battle between good and evil.

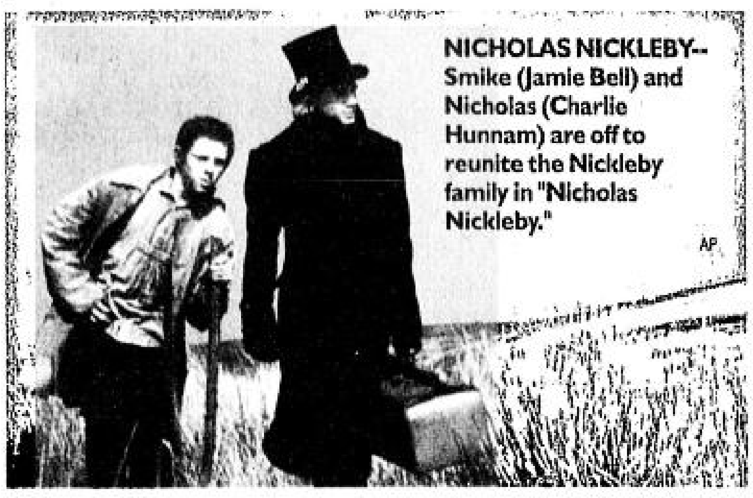
Douglas McGrath, who made his directorial debut with an adaptation of Jane Austen's "Emma" in 1996, returns to 19th century England to write and direct the story of a young man who loses his father and must grow up all too quickly in an uncaring world.

Charlie Hunnam, seen earlier in 2002 in the Katie Holmes star vehicle "Abandon," is Nicholas, a noble young man who defends widows and children, a character Dickens created in his quest to drum up outrage against the plight of poor children in England's factories, orphanages and boarding schools.

It all comes back to the family, according to Dickens; families can clasp us dear or break our spirits.

Treachery

Nicholas' family must endure not only his father's death but also his uncle's treachery. But the love and kindness his father engendered in Nicholas enables him to forge ahead.



NICHOLAS NICKLEBY-- Smike (Jamie Bell) and Nicholas (Charlie Hunnam) are off to reunite the Nickleby family in "Nicholas Nickleby." AP

At 19, Nicholas needs to support his mother and sister. He turns to his Uncle Ralph, a London financier, for help. But for Ralph (Christopher Plummer) money—not family—comes first.

He ships Nicholas off to teach at a boarding school, the only apparent function of which is to starve and beat young boys. Shocked by the brutality there, Nicholas delivers a few whacks of his own to the cruel headmaster, rescues a servant boy (Jamie Bell, who starred in "Billy Elliot") and flees back to London to reunite his family.

Nicholas then discovers that his uncle has been using his comely young sister as a lure for wealthy investors. He forces his uncle to stop, igniting a promise of revenge.

"I will strike him until he can be struck no more!" fumes Uncle Ralph. "I shall put his ruin ahead of my own business!"

It's hard to tell who is more mean-spirited—Ralph Nickleby, headmaster Wackford Squeers (Jim Broadbent) or his wife (Juliet Stevenson). All three leap into their villainy with unabashed gusto.

Caskets of hay

Be warned—some of "Nicholas Nickleby's" settings are truly Dickensian and include horrid, freezing rooms where young boys shiver in caskets of hay.

Hunnam, who will appear in Anthony Minghella's adaptation of the Charles Frazier novel "Cold Mountain" in 2003, had a more difficult task, and his Nicholas is overly earnest much of the time. But that minor complaint is overshadowed by the antics of the film's all-star cast.

In a bit part as a traveling actor, Tony winner Nathan Lane—who starred in "The Producers," which won a record 12 Tonys—conjures up a riff on the theater world, a welcome respite from the film's heavier subjects.

Barry Humphries, best known as the indomitable Dame Edna, produces chuckles every time he appears as Mrs. Crummles. And Anne Hathaway (from "The Princess Diaries") is luminous as Madeline Bray, a young woman about to be traded off into marriage to pay back her father's debt.

McGrath—who wrote, directed and starred in 2000's "Company Man"—and cinematographer Dick Pope (whose credits include "Topsy-Turvy" and "The Way of the Gun") matched the film's look to each scene's mood. *AP*

'Far From Heaven' takes top honors

By Cristy Lemire

NEW YORK—"Far From Heaven," Todd Hayne's sumptuous homage to the Technicolor melodramas of the 1950s, was the big winner Monday at the New York Film Critics Circle Awards, taking honors for Best Film and Best Director.

Other categories

The movie also won in the categories of Best Supporting Actor (Dennis Quaid), Best Supporting Actress (Patricia Clarkson) and Best Cinematography (Edward Lachman).

Daniel Day-Lewis, who stars as the villainous Bill the Butcher in "Gangs of New York," won the Best Actor Award.

In a somewhat surprising choice, Diane Lane was named Best Actress for playing a wealthy suburban housewife who has an affair with a younger man in "Unfaithful." Lane was the subject of a retrospective last week at New York's Lincoln Center.

"Adaptation," about a screen writer who inserts himself in his script, won for Best Screenplay. The award went to Charlie Kaufman—and to his fictional twin Donald Kaufman, in an acknowledgment of the film's in-joke.

"Standing in the Shadows of Motown," about the studio musicians who played on the biggest Motown hits of the 1960s, was the group's choice for Best Documentary. And the racy Mexican hit "Y Tu Mama Tambien" won for foreign language film.

Marshall Fine, the group's chairman and the national film correspondent for Gannett News Service, said the awards boost the chances for "Far From Heaven" as the art-house Academy Award contender, and they put Lane on the Academy's radar.

""That one was the biggest surprise to me. That wasn't a performance that I'd personally been fond of, but obviously it connected in some way," said Fine, who's also a film critic for The Journal News in Westchester County. "Everyone talks about that scene on the train where she remembers what she's done. That scene sort of tipped it for her."

The New York Film Critics Circle, composed of 35 New York-based newspaper and magazine writers, prides itself on honoring films that often differ from Oscar winners.

Top movie

Last year they chose David Lynch's "Mulholland Drive" as the top movie; Ron Howard's "A Beautiful Mind" won the Best Picture Oscar. And in 2000 they picked Steven Soderbergh's "Traffic," while the Oscar went to Ridley Scott's "Gladiator."

Their choices this year reflect films that drew early attention at New York film festivals. *AP*

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PANELO. Brought the house down.

Experiencing woman power onstage

By Ronald G. Mangubat

RECENTLY, I found myself hopping from one stage performance to another and experienced a triumphant surge of woman power through dramatic monologues and two extraordinary concerts. It was an exhilarating experience discovering actresses and singers celebrating their womanhood on stage.

Book form

Some friends persuaded me to watch the re-staging of Eva Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues" at the Music Museum. I've read and heard so much about the show. As a matter of fact, I've perused the script in its book form—but nothing prepared me for the experience of watching it live.

The English version of the monologues, portrayed by three talented actresses—Angel Aquino, Belinda Panelo and Sheila Francisco—was a mind-blowing revelation. It opened my senses to a theme which, ever since I was a child, was considered taboo because of my conservative and religious upbringing.

For about two hours, the female genitalia were talked about and dissected. For the first time, I heard woman raving, ranting and extolling the joys, fears and pains of living with their anatomical "treasures."

Reactions

Gauging from the reactions of the audience, who seemed to be a mixed lot, listening to each monologue was like going through natural childbirth, where the cycle of pain and joy transpires. At first, there was a tinge of uneasiness everytime the word "vagina" was mentioned.

My seatmates, who looked like a septuagenarian couple, kept wincing and cringing as Angel, Belinda and Sheila shifted from one monologue to another, exclaiming over the dimensions and depth, poignancy and humor, pains and pleasures of women's vaginas.

Quiet hush

When Aquino got into character and personified the Bosnian rape victim who was abused by soldiers, there was a quiet hush. I felt that even the audience's applause seemed to have an aching sound. Francisco, on the other hand, elicited loud giggles from the younger crowd when she expounded on the experiences of a middle-aged woman who said her vagina was angry because it has been abused by technological devices such as tampons.

But it was Belinda Panelo who brought the house down, when she demonstrated the various kinds of orgasmic moans—from the most hesitant wail to the wildest scream. At this point, the audience was no longer inhibited. They'd gone from fear to pain and were already prepared to share the ersatz pleasures of womanhood.

Honest

"Why do you think the monologues were a big hit?," I asked a friend over beer after the performance. "Because they were so honest, and vaginas are rarely talked about," he said, "I never knew women felt that way about themselves."

Next, I found myself at Greenbelt, Makati for "Songbird Sings," Regine Velasquez's concert. I first saw Regine more than a decade ago at the old Rizal theater. She was a shy singer then, but her voice was already powerful.

Transformation

Since then, I've followed her career, became familiar with her songs and witnessed her transformation from a coy and timid performer into a poised, sophisticated and confident chanteuse.

Regine's concert did not disappoint. She was in her element as she sang the songs that made her what she is now. From her 16-year-old "Urong-sulong" hit up to the current "Palasyo," she sang with ease, despite the high notes, which I sometimes feared she couldn't reach.

I read in the internet that during a live concert, Whitney Houston failed to reach the last note of her classic "One Moment in Time" and she was never the same again.

Belters

That's the problem with belters, I guess. People expect them to sing songs with increasingly higher notes, and when they fail to deliver, the audience is unforgiving.

What I found lovable about Regine was that she didn't seem to be affected by her celebrity status at all. She could laugh and make fun of herself. When she joked that she could sing all her recorded songs up to the wee hours of the morning and the audience roared in agreement, she replied in jest, "*Ewan ko sa inyo, pero ako, uuwi pa ako sa* Bulacan." Such spontaneous simplicity truly endears Asia's songbird to her fans.

More mature crowd

The weekend after, I witnessed a more mature crowd at the PICC Plenary Hall when Kuh Ledesma and Zsa Zsa Padilla mounted their "Diva to Diva" concert. Considered by critics as two of the most sultry and classy singers in the country, the two divas merged their singing prowess and wowed the audience with a medley of classic love songs, timeless hits and lovely duets.

Singing Madonna's "Vogue" and Whitney Houston's "I'm Every Woman" in their grand opening act, Kuh and Zsa Zsa proved that they are still queens of the local pop music scene as they rocked the stage with their feminine dance steps.

It was, however, their romantic songs, which earned the loudest applause from the audience. From their Michel Legrand medley to their respective hits like "Dito Ba?" and "Kahit Na," both singers sang from the heart and seemed to pierce the souls of the seemingly love-struck crowd.

Warner Bros. shoots first film in Chinese

HONG KONG—US film giant Warner Bros. is filming its first-ever Chinese-language film in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, the company said Friday.

Gamble

Taking a gamble on the massive, as-yet untapped Chinese market, Warner Brothers began shooting "Turn Left, Turn Right," a whimsical love story based on the illustrated novel by Taiwanese author Jimmy Liao, in Taiwan on Dec. 26.

Production is to continue in Hong Kong and mainland China, the company said in a statement.

Directed by Johnnie To and Wai Ka-fai, and starring Takeshi Kaneshiro, "Turn Left, Turn Right" is the "perfect entry into China's local-language film marketplace," Warner Bros. said in its statement.

The film, a joint production with Raintree Pictures of Singapore and To's production company Milkyway Image, is the first Chinese-language full-length feature film by Warner Bros.

Partner

The company is also jointly producing with China's Century Heroes and Hainan White Horse Advertising Media Co. Ltd, as well as a Hong Kong-based partner Salon Films, "The Swordsmen," a series of 10 Mandarin-language, made-for-television features, currently being filmed in northwestern China.

AFP

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SATURDAY*Special*

Nicole Kidman, heart and soul

By David Germain

KIDMAN had to wear a prosthetic nose to make her look more like Virginia Woolf in "The Hours." AFP

LOS ANGELES—Nicole Kidman used to be afraid of Virginia Woolf, preferring the romantic worlds of the Brontë sisters or Jane Austen to Woolf's demanding prose.

British author

When it came time to play Woolf onscreen in "The Hours," however, Kidman embraced the British author heart and soul.

"If you take on a role, you take it on, You don't have somebody else step in and do the hard bits," Kidman, 35, said in an interview for "The Hours," which costars Meryl Streep and Julianne Moore and is based on Michael Cunningham's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel.

Kidman agreed to wear a prosthetic nose that made her almost unrecognizable, a look that vexed her two children, who referred to her as "that Woolf woman." Rather than let a double do last-minute close-ups of Woolf's hand as she wrote, Kidman insisted on returning to London from the United States to shoot the scenes, learning to write right-handed. She refused to let a double do any takes in a cold, rushing river where the crew reenacted Woolf's suicide.

Above all, Kidman now adores the richly internalized, frank and fanciful works of the author, who killed herself in 1941 at age 59.

Oppressive

Growing up in Australia, Kidman had sampled Woolf's worlds but found them dense and oppressive.

"I'd run away from her. As a schoolgirl, you run toward the Brontës, you run toward Austen," Kidman said.

"Discovering her in my 30s was when I needed to disocover Virginia Woolf. Becasue I think you need to have some experiences in life, you need to have an intellectual capacity to handle Virginia, which you don't necessarily have—well, I didn't have—as a teenager," said the actress, who prepared for "The Hours" by reading "Mrs. Dalloway" and other Woolf novels, along with diaries, letters and biographies.

"The Hours" follows a day in the lives of three women: the melancholy Woolf as she begins writing "Mrs. Dalloway" in the 1920s; a despondent 1950s housewife (Moore) reading Woolf's novel; and a contemporary incarnation of Mrs. Dalloway (Streep) planning a party for a friend with AIDS (Ed Harris).

"Mrs. Dalloway" and Woolf novels such as "The Waves" and "To the Lighthouse" are difficult and unsettling reads, applying nonlinear plotting to modernist themes of feminism, mortality and isolation.

Dark time

Kidman came to Woolf and "The Hours" at a suitably dark time in her own life, after a miscarriage and amid the breakup of her marriage to Tom Cruise last year.

"I was pretty nihilistic in terms of my view of what it was all about," she said. "Where we were going. Why I was existing in the world, really. *Why* was the big question. So it was sort of the perfect time to encounter Mrs. Woolf. Because you're raw, emotionally raw. Your ability to understand with compassion somebody else's struggle is just there . . . It's cathartic, because it means you're not alone."

During her 11 years with Cruise, Kidman had gained acclaim with the film "To Die For" and such theater works as "The Blue Room." Yet she generally stood in the shadow of Cruise, with whom she costarred in "Days of Thunder," "Far and Away" and Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut."

Since the breakup, Kidman emerged with an Academy Award nomination for last year's musical hit "Moulin Rouge," and more critical and commercial success with the ghost tale "The Others."

"It's given me belief in myself, which I didn't necessarily have," she said. "One of the things I've had to grapple with is just who am I, where do I fit in now in the world if I'm not with my partner anymore. That's where you try and put your two feet on the ground and go, 'OK, I'm going to take my steps forward alone?'"

Her romantic life now is "just, umm, nowhere, to be blatantly honest," Kidman said. "I'm getting there. I'm just slow, I don't rush into things. And I'm a little gun-shy."

While she flopped in the low-budgeted heist romance "Birthday Girl" early in 2002, Kidman has an impressive range of upcoming films.

She just finished shooting Anthony Minghella's "Cold Mountain," based on Charles Frazier's Civil War novel, in which she plays the sweetheart of a wounded Confederate soldier. Jude Law and Renee Zellweger costar.

Also in the can are "The Human Stain," based on Philip Roth's novel, in which Kidman plays a janitor involved with a classics professor (Anthony Hopkins), and the 1930s-era drama "Dogville," directed by Lars von Trier ("Dancer in the Dark"). *AP*

> The actress now adores the works of the author, who killed herself in 1941 at age 59

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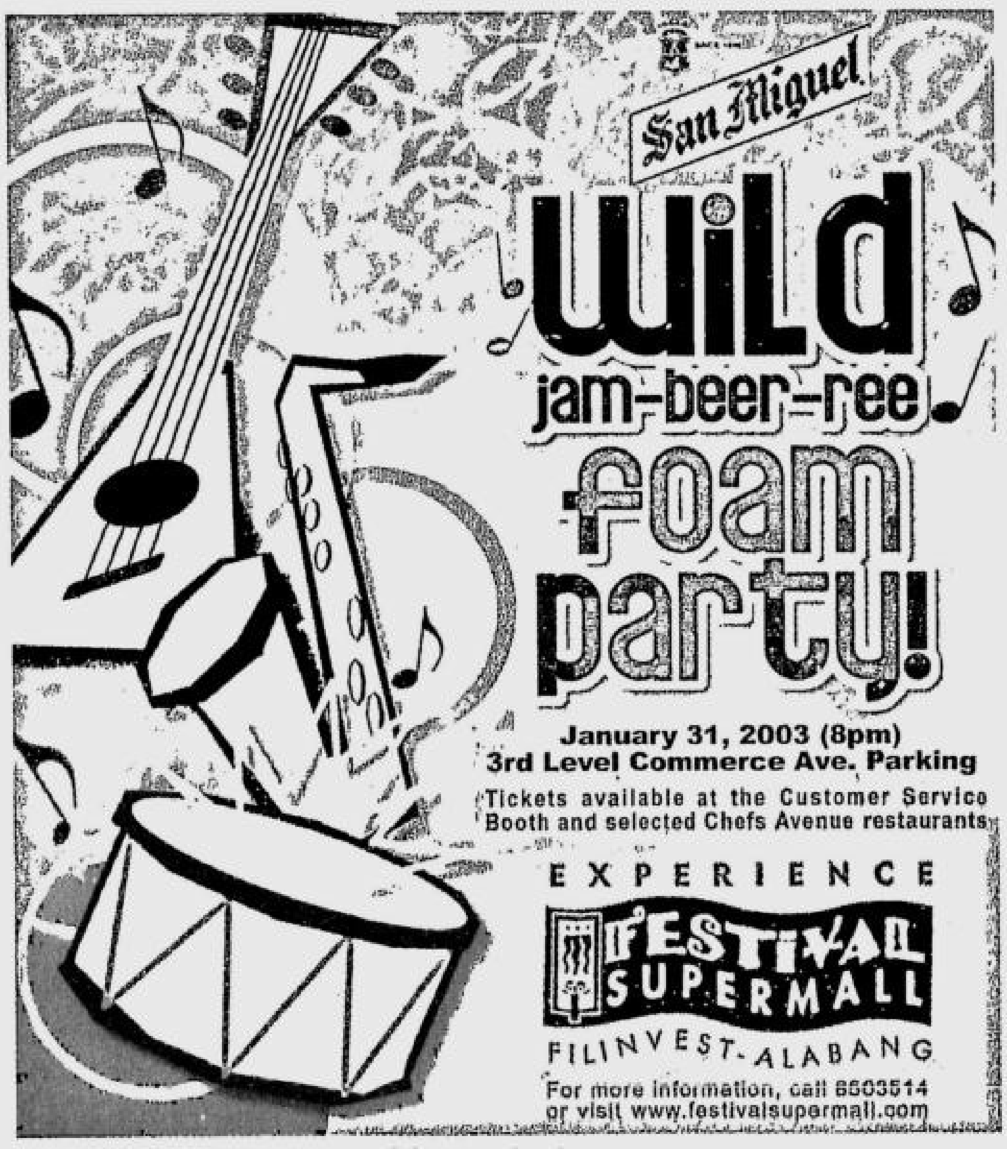

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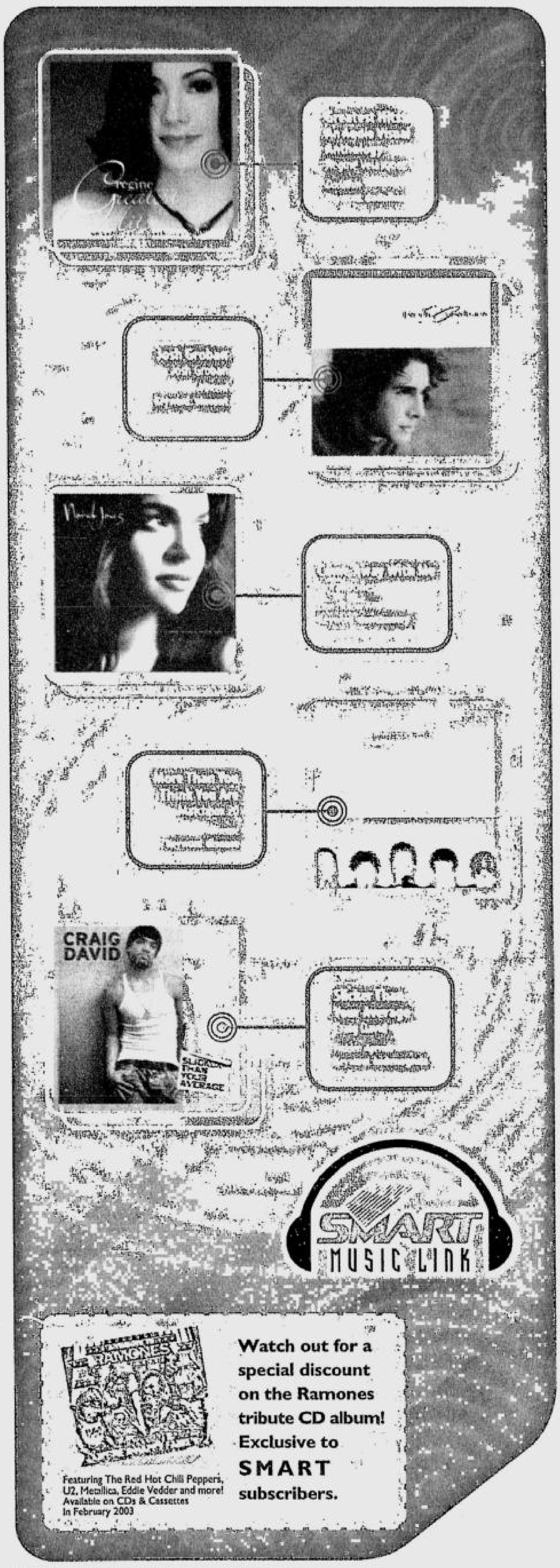

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4	**Josh Groban**	Josh Groban	keyword: *vincent*
5	**It Had To Be You... The Great American Songbook**	Rod Stewart	
6	**This Is Me... Then**	Jennifer Lopez	
7	**Come Away With Me**	Norah Jones	keyword: *dontknowy*
8	**Shaman**	Santana	
9	**Duets**	Barbra Streisand	
10	**Masters Of Chant Chapter III**	Gregorian	
11	**You Had Me At Hello**	Various Artists	
12	**More Than You Think You Are**	Matchbox 20	keyword: *disease*
13	**Simply The Best 60's**	Various Artists	
14	**Best Of MTV 2002**	Various Artists	keyword: *stupid*
15	**Let Go**	Avril Lavigne	
16	**Prelude: Best Of**	Charlotte Church	
17	**Chicago Story: Complete Greatest Hits**	Chicago	
18	**Love You Down - Referendum**	Various Artists	keyword: *hey*
19	**Only Selfless Love 2**	Various Artists	
20	**OA Sa Hits (Live)**	Ogie Alcasid	
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Bing Pimentel's songs performed in dream concert

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST month, the songs of Lourdes "Bing" Pimentel were performed in a symphonic concert at Teatro Aguinaldo. We arrived early at the venue to find Bing in a state of "excited anticipation" because many of her guests had sent word that they would be gracing the occasion.

Senators

"They" included a number of senators, colleagues of her husband Sen. Nene Pimentel, former president Cory Aquino, Chief Justice Hilario Davide, luminaries from Mindanao and friends from Cagayan de Oro City. If they all arrived, it was going to be an SRO affair. No wonder Bing was excited.

But, like a real trouper, she was able to focus on some TV interviews that we asked her to do before her special guests arrived.

She admitted that the concert titled "Awit—Pag-ibig, Alay, Papuri," would be the culmination of her lifelong dream to hear her songs played by a symphony orchestra (in this instance, no less than the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Alfredo Buenaventura).

PIMENTEL (center) onstage with guest singers, (from left) Pinky Marquez, Gelyn Oñate, Dulce, Shiela Asuncion, Bimbo Cerrudo, Freddie Aguilar, Gamaliel Viray and Isay Alvarez.

She wanted to hear her songs in full-throated rendition, not just by the orchestra but also by some of the country's best singers—Dulce, Freddie Aguilar, Pinky Marquez, Isay Alvarez, Bimbo Cerrudo, Gamaliel Viray, Shiela Asuncion, etc.

Truly challenging

The songs themselves were inspired by dramatic and emotional moments in Bing's life with Nene and their children. Some of those moments were truly challenging, like Nene's incarceration as a political oppositionist during the martial law years.

As Bing's heart went out to her husband during those times of danger and separation, she expressed her complex feelings through the dramatic and moving songs she wrote.

At this point, Bing had to conclude her media interviews because quite a number of her guests had arrived and she had to welcome them by herself, because Nene was still attending to urgent matters at the Senate.

When he finally came, it was pretty close to showtime, so our projected interview with Bing and Nene together had to be moved back to the intermission.

Interview

That was OK with us because, 30 minutes before, we had snagged an interesting interview backstage with Dulce and Pinky. The topic, why many Visayans sing so well, delighted them, and they really launched into it, occasionally illustrating their points with thrilling vocal "explosions" that brought a lot of people to their dressing room door.

TV interviewer Andy Bais, himself also from the Visayas and an outstanding singer, to boot, had a whale of a good time with the two Visayan divas, and joined them in a final vocal rendition that ended the interview on a musical high.

The interview will be aired this month on "Kool Iskul," an educational TV show telecast from Cagayan de Oro City and watched in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Concert proper

During the concert proper, Dulce and Pinky pretty much carried the show. At the intermission, Nene and Bing extricated themselves from their friends, including Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senators Loren Legarda, Joker Arroyo and Noli De Castro, to be interviewed by Rito Asilo.

Nene candidly expressed how he felt when he had first heard Bing's songs many years ago. He also shared his thoughts on his birthday that day, his past achievements, and the goals that he had set for himself in the years ahead.

Love songs

The concert's second half initially focused on the love songs written by Bing, then showcased the pieces she had composed for her relevant stage productions like "Huwag Pumayag sa Dagdag-Bawas" and the religious musical revue, "Nasaan si Hesus?," which has been performed all over the country.

After the concert ended, Bing could finally breathe a sigh of relief—and gratitude to God—for the fulfillment of her cherished dream, a fitting musical gift on Nene's birthday.

This year, she plans to restage "Huwag Pumayag sa Dagdag-Bawas" and "Nasaan si Hesus?," and to produce a new musical show that will showcase more expressions of her abiding musical gift.

AM/FM

K-lite serves up your favorite singers' live recordings

By Rito P. Asilo

THERE is a radio show on the airwaves that offers more than just the polished voices and sounds of one's favorite recording artists. On our regular date with the good, old medium, we chanced upon the live recording of the now-defunct "college rock" gurus, Crowded House's "Don't Dream It's Over."

Staple

This 1988 staple culled from the "Recurring Dream Greatest Hits Live" album of the pop group known for its songwriters' gift for melody and lyrical detail, brought back memories of the decade known not just for big hair and tacky costumes, but also for classy, melody-driven songs.

The computer age has allowed recording engineers to mask the vocal flaws and augment the singing abilities of recording artists when they record songs for their albums. The best way to find out if you are getting the real thing is to attend live concerts. If you don't have that option, the next best thing is to listen to live recordings of these musical acts. And 103.5 K-Lite FM's "Light and Live" highlights just that.

Good melodies

Broadcast every Thursday from 9 to 10 p.m., "Light and Live" features not just light, sappy, M-O-R fare but also rock and alternative acts, like the rap-rock-metal group that Brandon Boyd spearheads, Incubus, whose good melodies underneath layers of surging guitars endeared them to rock fans.

On the show, we heard the group's "Wish You Were Here," from their third album, "Morning View." How about "Nice to Know You," guys?

If you have a good song in mind, you can call the radio network's number and request it. If you're in luck, you just might hear that song's live version.

Other than the novelty of the format, we found it refreshing to listen to DJ Ron's (Ronnie Gemalan) brief trivia about the show's featured artists before their songs were played.

INCUBUS. Their good melodies have endeared them to rock fans.

For example: Did you know that Lenny Kravitz is really not a party animal, as opposed to the image he seems to project? Apparently, Lisa Bonet's husband is a workaholic who wakes up at 5 a.m. to write and record his music, and gets in bed earlier than your average rocker. Tommy Lee would surely disapprove!

It's no wonder that Kravitz's retro-rock act appears to be well-thought-out when you listen to his multi-genre fusion of psychedelia, funk, soul and reggae.

Malibu beach

We also learned that Incubus lives in a house by the famous Malibu beach, where they either hang out all day or record their songs. What a life, huh?

The disadvantages come to the fore when you have a good songwriter whose singing ability is not as strong as his musical artistry, as was evident when we heard The Cranberries' live version of "Ode to My Family" (obviously from the group's "Beneath the Skin: Live in Paris" concert).

You start tapping your fingers when you hear the lovely string arrangement of the song and get ready to sing along with Dolores O'Riordan. But when you listen to her, you realize that the overdubbed vocals of the recording were simply an engineering gimmick to mask her vocal weakness.

We are not unfamiliar with these disparities in studio and live recordings. Recently, when we watched an awards show on DVD that featured 'N Sync, the boys sounded just as good as their recording. These boys really have powerful pipes. The same goes for 98 degrees, Westlife and Human Nature.

Flats and sharps

Sadly, that's not the case with the Backstreet Boys or O-Town. (We cringed as we heard "Liquid Dreams" sung live and, believe you me, a lot of those notes went straight to the land of flats and sharps!)

The same observation goes for all the live recordings we have of our local artists. These days, there are so many in the local market (ZsaZsa's, Ogie's, Sharon's, Freestyle's, Side A's, Martin's, Gary's, Regine's, Kuh's, Janno's, Lani's, etc).

Get your copies and decide for yourself if your favorite singers are really as talented as they seem on record. Don't be swayed by engineering blackmail. And maybe our radio programs can give us a chnace to listen to these local artists' live recordings?

Back to the "Light and Live" show: Before the show ended, we were glad to hear the soulful, wistful Suzanne Vega classic on child abuse, "Luka," apparently culled from the 1999 Lilith Fair compilation, and the bouncy acoustic feel of Natalie Imbruglia's "Wrong Impression" (from last year's "White Lilies Island" album).

If you like the "real feel" that a live recording offers to the uncompromising ear, K-Lite's Thursday night show may just be the ticket for you.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM JAN 18 - JAN 24

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[illegible]	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:30 Bida si Mister, Bida si Misis 9:30 FPJ Action Cinema 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Fox News 11:00 Business and Leisure	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night Specials *Promise Her Anything* 11:30 Star Trek Voyager	6:00 Dragon Ball Z 6:30 Imbestigador 7:30 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:30 Kakabakaba 9:30 Blockbuster Cinema *Matalino man ang Matsing Nausahan din* 11:20 Flash Report 11:30 Master Showman	6:00 Real TV 6:30 Entertainment Tonite 7:00 Largo 8:00 7 Days 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse *Phil. Parenting Conference*	7:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 8:00 Star For A Night 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 Kagat ng Dilim	6:00 Travel Time 6:30 The Beast Machines 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 7th Heaven 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deal	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 E! News Weekend 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 E! News Weekend
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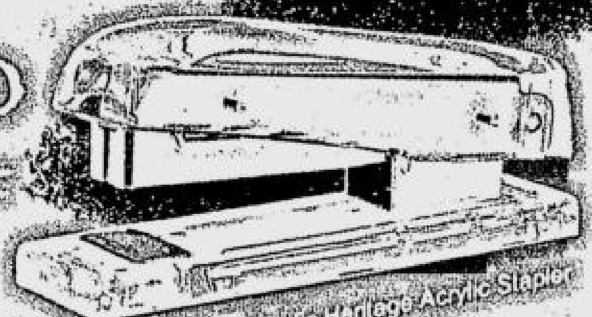
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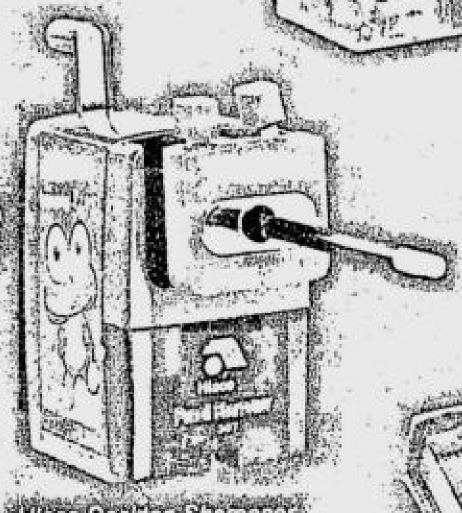
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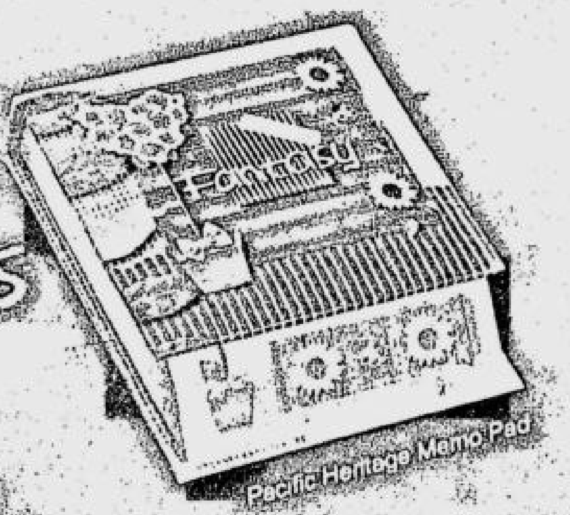
- DO TAKE DOWN NOTES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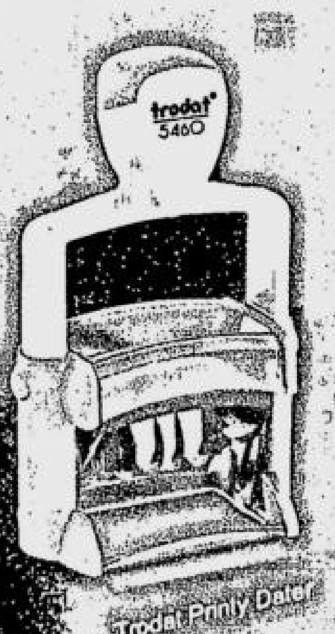
- DO REMEMBER IMPORTANT DATES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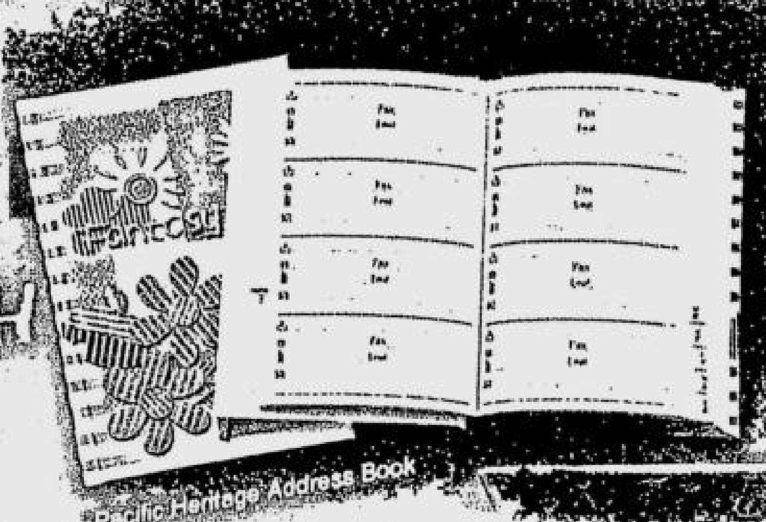
- DO KEEP IN TOUCH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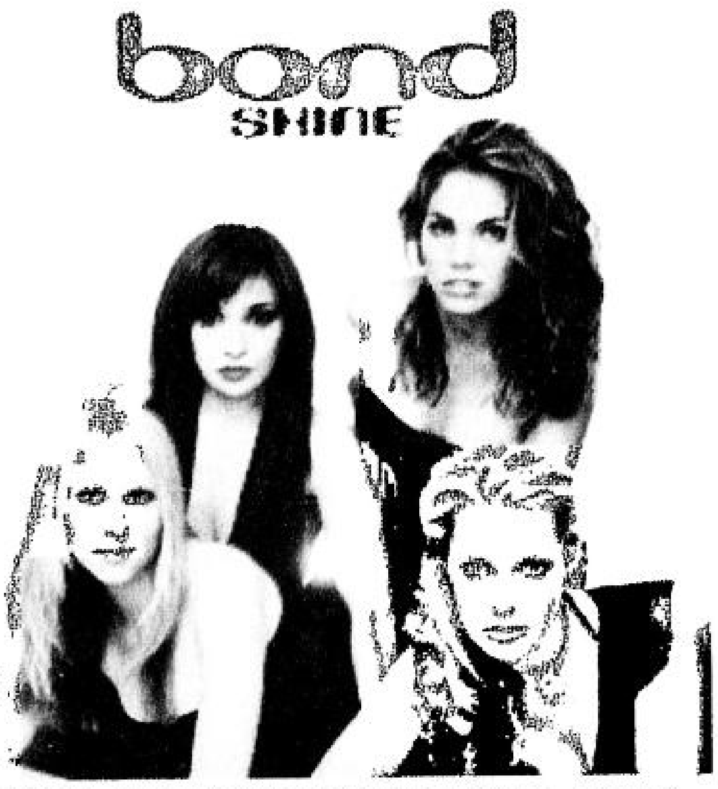
'Shine' is less than brilliant



BOND. Don't fit the fusty image of classical musicians—obviously!

By Noelani Torre

LEAFING through the CD inlay of Bond's sophomore release "Shine" (Decca) is like rifling through an issue of FHM or Maxim. Here you'll find the members of the classical crossover string quartet in various sultry, sexy poses—and there isn't a single violin, viola, or cello in sight.

Four members

Bond's four members—Haylie Ecker (first violin), Eos Chater (second violin), Tania Davis (viola), and Gay-Yee Westerhoff (cello)—are all lovely ladies, and it's a fact that they evidently don't want us to forget.

This all-female classically trained quartet debuted on the international music scene with the hugely successful album "Born" two years ago, and they have since then been touring the globe, selling more than two and a half million copies of their first release.

What makes these women so attractive to all audiences is that they don't fit the picture most people have of classical musicians. Folks have a tendency to view classical music and those who are connected with it as fusty, old-fashioned, and generally boring—everything the Bond girls are not.

Bedroom hair

No tuxedos or modest gowns for these violinists. Instead what we get are short skirts, cleavage, and bedroom hair. Of course, don't expect Bach or Mozart, either. Bond's music (labeled as classical crossover) is an eclectic blend of classical melodies and various pop, techno, and new age elements.

Bond has been hailed as "classical music's answer to the Spice Girls," but we beg to differ. Sure, they're pretty and sexy, but unlike the pop group, they are also possessed of a good amount of musical talent and innovation. These ladies play their instruments with ease and accomplishment, and their alluring image is only part of the packaging (let's face it, sex does sell).

With "Shine," the girls are proving that they're not just a one-hit album wonder. This new release, composed of 12 tracks and a bonus cut, all have Asian and Latin influences. In general, however, despite the apparent effort that went into making it, "Shine" falls a bit short of our expectations.

There are no jarring notes in the album; it's actually quite easy to listen to. The problem is that it's too easy—one track begins to sound just like the next, so sooner or later the music just fades into the background. Who wants to listen to background music?

Techno beats

This isn't because the pieces are boring in themselves, though they're not brilliant, either. The whole album has been so heavily produced and engineered that we fear the Bond girls' sound is lost somewhere between heavy techno beats and electronic effects.

Take the first track: "Allegretto" begins with a strong string intro, but the synthesizer soon takes over the show. This piece is quite catchy, though, with a rhythm and melody that will have you humming and foot-tapping along.

"Shine," the title track, sounds like a theme from a '70s spy/action flick, but with light West Asian (that's Middle-Eastern to the unpolitically correct) spicing. There are some vocals on this one, chants in a vaguely Arabian manner that we can't make up our mind about (do they add or detract from the piece, etc.).

The title track didn't quite "shine," however. If we were to choose one that did in some way, it would be "Strange Paradise," the Bond interpretation of a classical work by Borodin. It has a clear melodic line and the "effects" are thankfully more subdued. Finally, the strings come through on this one. *(To be concluded)*

Ronald Navarro's voice is his ticket to success

By Andy Bais

RONALD Navarro is no tyro when it comes to powerful singing. Given the right breaks and proper exposure, this young comer will make his presence felt in the recording scene.

Church choir

Ronald has already paid his dues. He relates that he has been singing for most of his life. He was a member of a church choir since the tender age of seven. And it was there that he honed his singing talent.

His association with religious singing led him to become a gospel singer and, eventually, his joining the Papuri singers. His solo renditions of gospel songs were even featured in some Papuri albums.

In the mid '90s, he went into mainstream singing by joining bands with himself as frontliner. "*Siguro, naka* 15 bands *din ako*—we had gigs in local hotels both here and abroad. It was at this stage *na lumawak ang aking* knowledge *sa pagkanta. Kumakanta na ako ng mga* love songs *nina* Michael Bolton and James Ingram," Ronald enthuses.

His effort to keep improving his craft didn't go unnoticed. His dream of becoming a solo recording artist was finally realized with the release of his self-titled album under Harmony Music. It features 10 Tagalog cuts carefully chosen to suit his powerful tenor voice.

Debut album

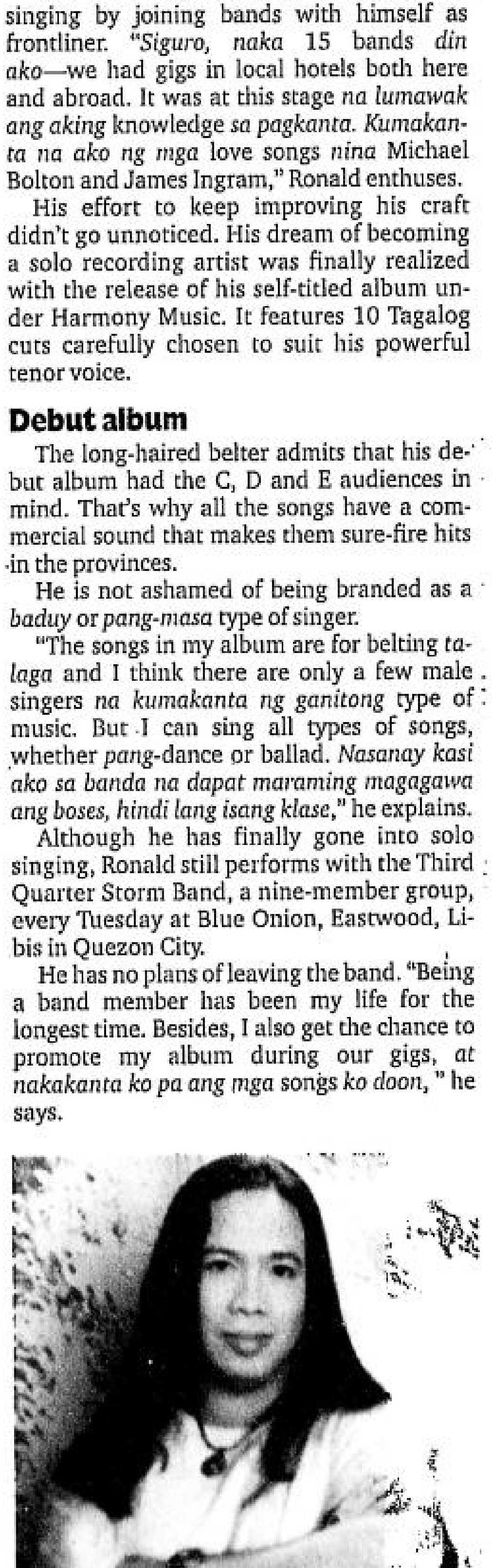
The long-haired belter admits that his debut album had the C, D and E audiences in mind. That's why all the songs have a commercial sound that makes them sure-fire hits in the provinces.

He is not ashamed of being branded as a *baduy* or *pang-masa* type of singer.

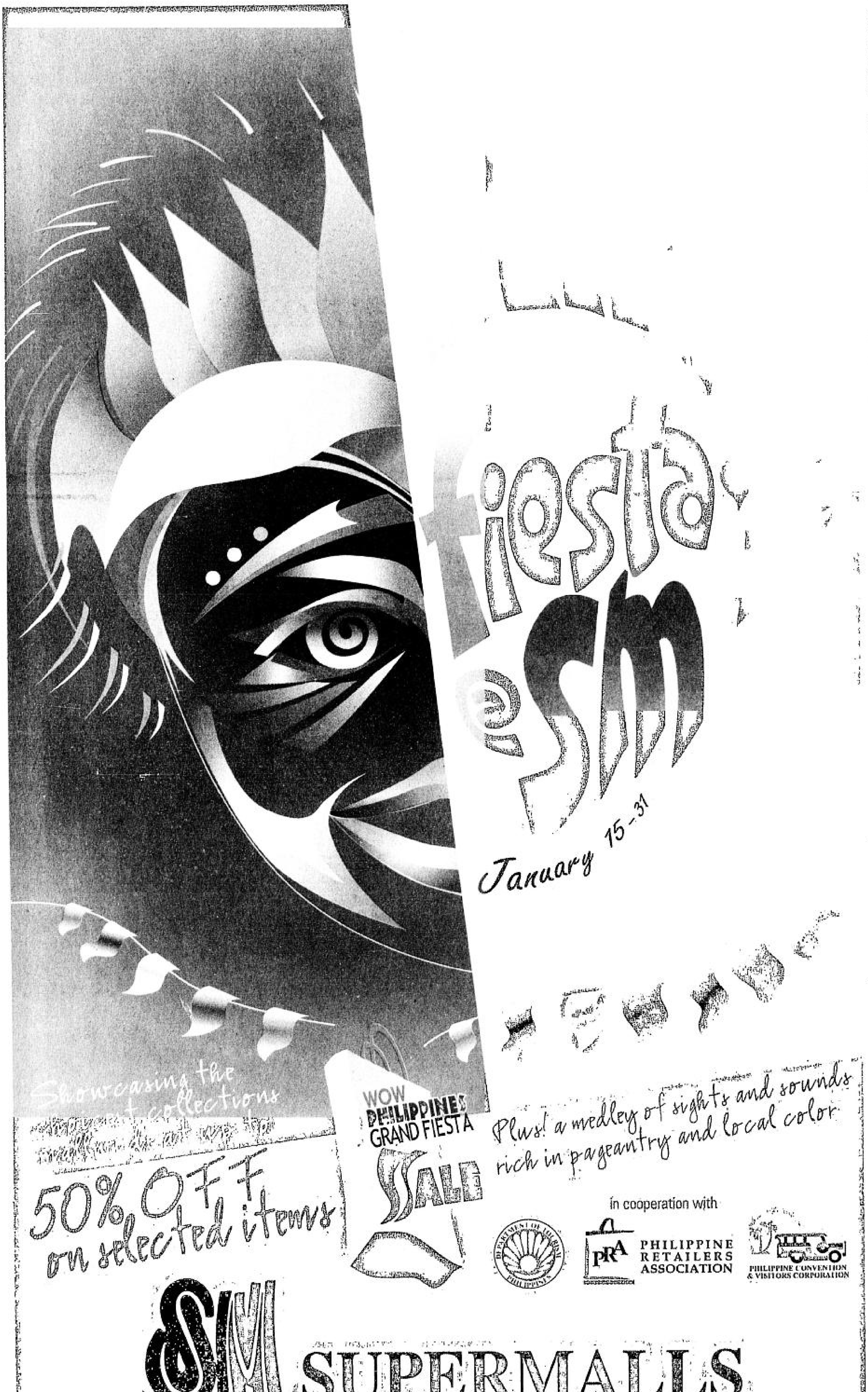
"The songs in my album are for belting *talaga* and I think there are only a few male singers *na kumakanta ng ganitong* type of music. But I can sing all types of songs, whether *pang*-dance or ballad. *Nasanay kasi ako sa banda na dapat maraming magagawa ang boses, hindi lang isang klase*," he explains.

Although he has finally gone into solo singing, Ronald still performs with the Third Quarter Storm Band, a nine-member group, every Tuesday at Blue Onion, Eastwood, Libis in Quezon City.

He has no plans of leaving the band. "Being a band member has been my life for the longest time. Besides, I also get the chance to promote my album during our gigs, *at nakakanta ko pa ang mga* songs *ko doon*," he says.



NAVARRO. Has paid his musical dues.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E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph
SATURDAY Special

Sharon Stone loves her new life

STONE. Return to filmmaking.

By Jane Barrett

MILAN—Sharon Stone, who shot to stardom in "Basic Instinct," loves her new life away from Hollywood, but she's reveling in her return to filmmaking following her recovery from a life-threatening brain aneurysm that jerked her out of the limelight in 2001.

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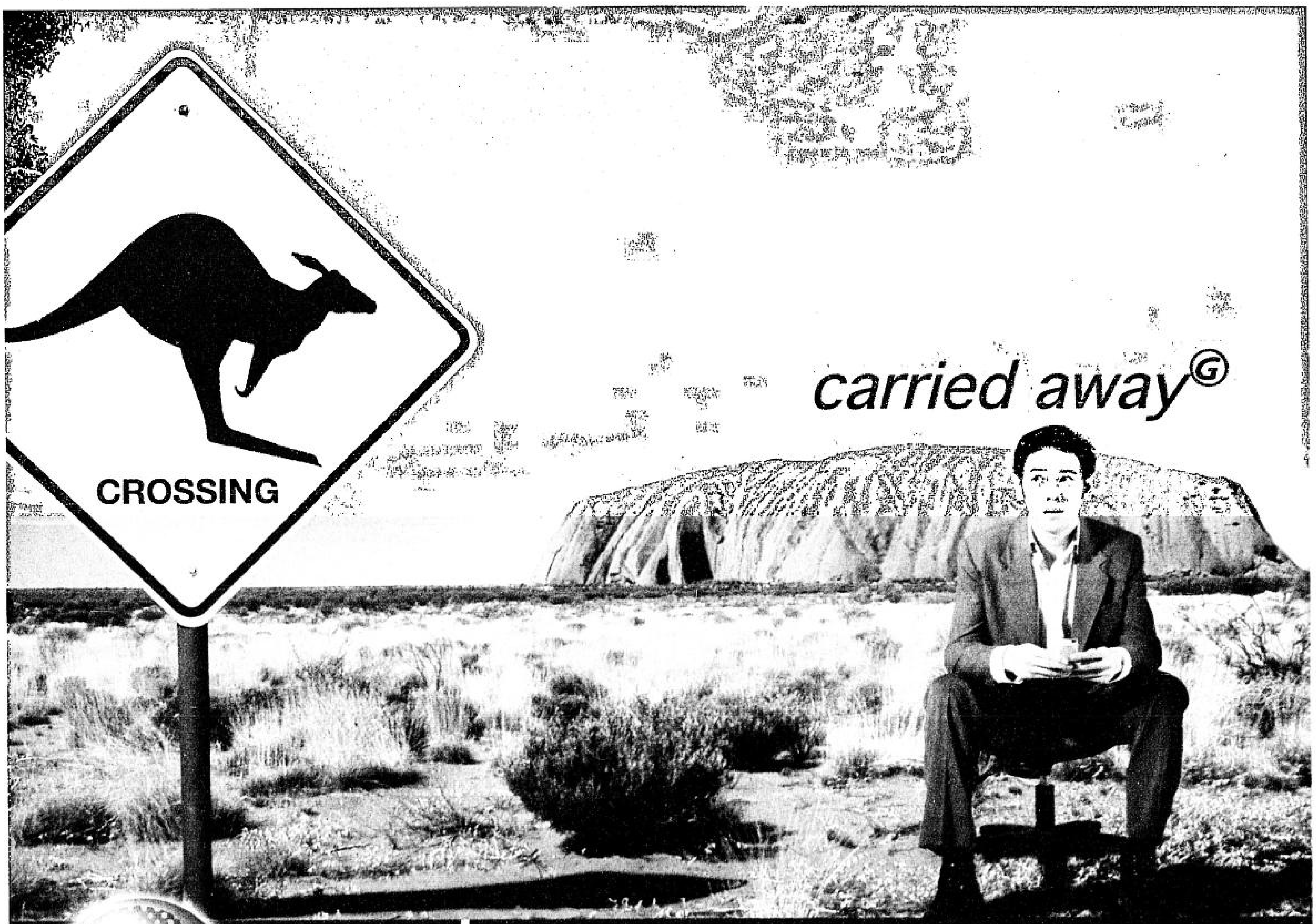

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Songs about life, pain and love

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

Brian McKnight
From There to Here
MCA Universal

THIS deftly-crafted 17-song set percolates with R&B, ballads and pop tunes. Tightly woven melodies blend smoothly with Brian's cool voice, making this album a real treat.

Sensitivity

"The Way Love Goes" possesses an earthy confidence without overshadowing Brian's sensitivity. He has an expressive voice, both soulful and emotional.

"Sorry Song" features Martin Nievera and Prescott Ellison. Their performance is stirring and very sincere. It's about love and heartbreak but it doesn't encourage us to wallow in pain and sorrow.

"Let Me Love You" is full of honesty and feeling. Listening to this song can lift low and flagging spirits because it makes you believe that, with love, anything is possible.

More intense

"One Last Cry" is a painful song. What makes it more intense is the soft and introspective way it is sung—by a man.

"Love Is" is a good duet with Vanessa Williams. It smacks of romantic mush and sentiment, but it also has a sensual feel to it.

"Still In Love" and "The Only One For Me" are slow, poignant ditties that reflect sensitive emotions, both stylistically and lyrically.

MCNIGHT. Has an expressive voice, both soulful and emotional.

"6,8,12" and "Back at One" are pristine and fragile, brimming with such uncontained emotion that you can almost feel the singer's bittersweet longing. These songs speak about being changed by love. They're as mushy as our local ballads, minus the remorse resentment and pa-awa effect.

Duet

"Thank You For Saving My Life" is a duet with Martin Nievera. Their voices blend well together. This cut is laid-back, carefree, melodic but brilliant.

This album can alternately make you happy and sad. The strengths of this album are its melodies, lyrics and Brian's voice. Each song celebrates an aspect of life, pain and love, and encourages the listener to appreciate each moment before moving on.

Rosanna Roces finally reunited with mother, siblings

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FOR months now, Rosanna Roces has been expressing her wish to be reunited with her birth mother and siblings, from whom she's been separated since she was put up for adoption as a young child. Last Dec. 30, she achieved partial success in this regard when she was reunited on her "Startalk" TV show with her youngest sister.

Then, last Jan. 4, viewers of the show were stunned when Rosanna appeared with her mother, Alona Duran, and her two other sisters. Although a question was raised about the youngest sibling, the reunion was generally euphoric.

Viewers were tickled pink to see that, although Rosanna and her newfound relations looked different from each other, they had the same frank, even sassy temperament.

The episode attracted a lot of viewers because, while it played itself out like a complex soap opera, it was no dramatic production, but an actual event. Talk about "reality" TV, this one beat shows like "Survivor" for intriguing complications!

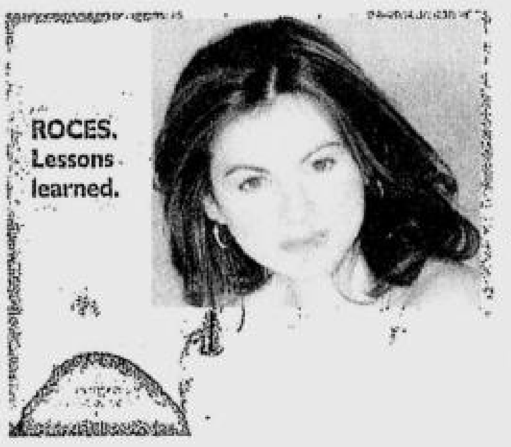
Among its positive effects is Rosanna's decision to take more personal care of her own children from here on in, because she herself has experienced the pain of being neglected and feeling incomplete as a result of growing up without her birth mother.

We trust that viewers learned valuable lessons from this real-life drama, and will also make it a point to take better care of their own children.

Feedback

From Ellen O. Marfil, production unit manager, GMA news and public affairs:

"This is in reference to your column which came out Jan. 13, titled 'When breaking news explodes on TV,' where you commented on how two morning TV shows covered and handled President Gloria Arroyo's Dec. 30 announcement not to run for president in 2004.



ROCES. Lessons learned.

"In your column, it was mentioned that you only started channel-surfing around 8:04 a.m. and caught the news about the president's announcement to withdraw from the presidential race in Channel 2 and saw nothing of it in Channel 7's 'Unang Hirit.'

'Just to clarify, 'Unang Hirit' aired the president's speech at 7:14 and from 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m., the show had Juan Ponce Enrile, followed by Senate President Franklin Drilon, then Ernie Maceda on phonepatch interviews by Arnold Clavio for their reactions. The President's speech was also replayed three times in between these interviews.

"Definitely, 'Unang Hirit' did not miss the importance of the president's declaration that morning and was on top of it during the course of its morning telecast.

"We hope that this corrects the impression that the network had been remiss in its duty to bring this very important news to the public and accord it the appropriate analysis and airtime.

"Thank you for your concern and we are one with you in giving the best in broadcast journalism that our people so deserve."

Youth Council members visit PGH

The MTV and Penshoppe Youth Council members recently visited the UP PGH Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, where they donated blood and visited the different patients in the Rehab ward.

The day started off with Council members Brad Turvey, Danielle Mendoza, Terrence Koa and Kelly Misa assisting in the bloodletting program. Terrence himself donated blood.

After the bloodletting, the members visited the patients and gave them some Christmas packages. The patients, residents and interns were excited to see the young ambassadors of goodwill.

After the presentation of gifts to the patients, the MTV Penshoppe Youth Council members presented a check to the UP PGH Department of Rehabilitation, represented by Dra. Sharon Ignacio, Dr. Ernesto Nepomuceno, Dr. Conrad Dimalaluan, Dr. Bong Inciong, Dr. Nars Fernandez, and Dr. Michelle Beluso. The donation will help fund various projects of the department, including providing free medical assistance to less fortunate patients.

OOD LETTING EVENT

FROM left, Rod Nepomuceno, Terrence Koa, Danielle Mendoza, Kelly Misa, Dr. Ernie Nepomuceno, Dr. Conrad Dimalaluan, Brad Turvey and Anne Maningo.

A perfect vacation

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

(Conclusion)

WHISTLER, British Columbia, Canada—In the evening, we were guests at a series of fine dining dinners. This became our routine: Skiing during the day and fine dining in the evening. It was a perfect vacation!

Day of skiing

I remember coming in from a day of skiing and tasting a wonderful drink prepared by a friend—a cup of hot chocolate with peppermint schnapps—tasted like the before-bedtime chocolate candy, After Eight. *Sarap!*

We had dinner at The Bearfoot Bistro, Carramba, an Alsatian (from Alsace) restaurant called Val d'isere and Amami, a restaurant specializing in Japanese-style Chinese cuisine.

Among the most delicious dishes I sampled were a Seared duck foie gras with rhubarb compote, grape seed oil, banyuls (whatever that is) and beet vinaigrette; Wild North West Caribou filet "Millefeuille" with purple mustard jus and sauted chanterelle; a nice pan-seared foie gras with an all spice French toast and Okanagan crab apple; a Muscony duck breast with firewood honey and confit orange and szechuan pepper duck jus; a perfectly cooked squid appetizer with an nice a'lioli dip on the side, and some of the most fantastic and creative desserts one can imagine.

Wines

We also experienced some of the best-tasting wines, like a nice red and white made by a company in the British Columbia area called Popular Grove. Superb! This is a perfect example of superior wine that is reasonably priced.

The Bearfoot Bistro had the most extensive wine list. They even had a 1947 Chateau Lafitte Rothchild that cost $13,000. Wow! I would rather hold on to that money, drink a $12 bottle, open my eyes and still have $12,988!

But our last meal was a bit of a letdown. When I saw the come-on, "Japanese-style Chinese cuisine," I had a strong feeling it would not be that great. It seemed like a dining place with an identity crisis.

But the evening was salvaged when we moved to a nice Italian restaurant called Umberto's for some great dessert—Tiramisu, a lime tarte and a chocolate ball dessert that all chocoholics would die for. The evening had been saved!

Happy eating!

E-mail me at sandydaza@shaw.ca

Sharon Stone loves her new life

From page E1

Full strength

Stone, often voted one of Hollywood's sexiest stars, is now back to full strength, with a two-year-old toddler tearing around the house. She has shed her sultry "bad girl" image for her comeback movie, Mike Figgis' "Cold Creek Manor."

"The new film was intriguing to make because normally I would play the villain and instead I play the one getting chased," Stone told Reuters at men's fashion week in Milan.

"It's exhausting! Getting in the rain, being thrown down wells, getting chased around with an axe," laughed the actress whose interrogation scene in "Basic Instinct" famously sparked a furious debate as to whether she was wearing any underwear.

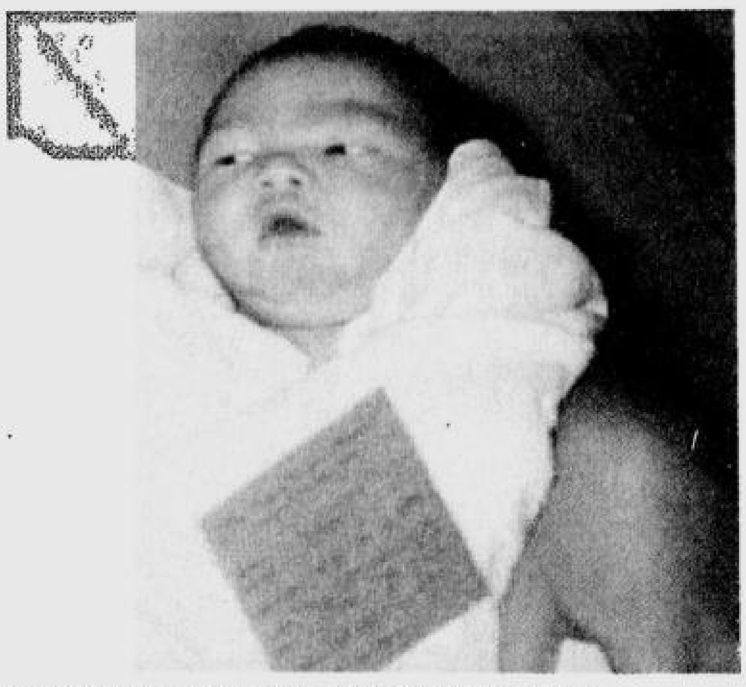
The new film, which also stars Dennis Quaid, should come out in the United States early this autumn "in that sort of scary season when it starts to get cold," the 44-year-old said, regaling designer Donatella Versace with tales of filming in a haunted house.

Thriller

Cold Creek Manor is a thriller about a couple who buy a country house in upstate New York, only to find the psychotic previous owner wants it back.

The film was shot in a house in Canada, where Stone said the previous owners made their own strange comeback. "All the crew had this feeling like 'did you see somebody in there?', 'did you see a little girl?', 'that door closed by itself,' and we found out all this incredible spooky stuff had actually happened in the house it was shot in," she said.

Stone has brushed off her vamp image as a means of making life easier and says it's no reflection of her true character. *Reuters*



GIAN Kristoffer, God's "miracle gift" to Ansel and Joyce.

It's a boy!

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

DEAR Clara,

You know my Friday-evening ritual—I get a full-body massage from Tacing. But just so she does not doze off in the middle of kneading my sore spots away, I have to rent a Tagalog movie from Video City for her. And it has to be a bold movie because romantic films send her to sleep faster.

Opening scene

Friday of last week, we were at it again. The opening scene of the skin flick on the machine was a male prostitute servicing gay clients inside a moviehouse. When the lights went on, to his utter shock, the homosexual he was doing it with was his very own father.

Tacing suddenly remarked, "*Ate Luds, hindi kaya mangyari yan kay Ansel*?" To which I retorted, "Tacing, *si* Ansel, *malapit sa Diyos*."

Of course, you know who Ansel is. He is one of my best friends in the business, my writer who knows the real me best—sometimes, even better than myself. I mention that little story to you because early that same Friday, I went to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital to visit Ansel and his wife Joyce. You see, two days before, Joyce delivered a bouncing baby boy who measured a lengthy 51 cms. and weighed a heavy 7.1 pounds at birth.

Source of inspiration

The baby's name is Gian Kristoffer, GK for short. He is God's "miracle gift" to Ansel whose life story is a source of inspiration and wonder, especially to many gays out there who fervently wish to turn a new leaf but can't seem to make the grade.

That evening, inside the hospital suite that was cheered up with flowers and balloons and Disney characters, I saw Ansel's face bursting with gladness as he held his wife's hand and, together, they beheld the bundle of joy that the Lord had seen fit to gift them with.

For a moment there, I was dumbstruck—I was just awed by the utter limitlessness of God's powers to transform even the most "impossible" people.

You know, Clara, how so very gay your Tito Ansel used to be. He used to wear his hair long. And he used a coffee-colored pencil to augment and enhance his eyebrows.

I remember, there was a time on "Eye to Eye" when we had the newly crowned Bb. Pilipinas as guest. In the dressing room, Ansel borrowed her crown, scepter and cape, and proceeded to wear them—parading and strutting his stuff like he were a beauty queen himself!

I also can never forget his very original version of the song "I Will Survive," to which he gave life in the way that only he could, each time we went to a karaoke bar.

As he sang, he swayed, gyrated and "seduced" the microphone stand, making not so subtle sexual suggestions with his very dexterous fingers and even more dexterous tongue—to our hysterical delight.

Momentary pleasure

Ansel also presented to me—at different times, of course—a virtual parade of men who gave him momentary pleasure. He always came out of every relationship empty—in his wallet and, worse, in his heart, too.

Now, there was Ansel, beaming beside his wife and infant child, a most profound portrait of manhood. Really, Clara, I couldn't help but be amazed. There was a time, I asked him if the ghosts of the past still haunted him—even if only once in a while. His reply, "Quite often, Ate Luds. But they don't scare me anymore. I'm no longer enslaved by them."

Frankly, I didn't believe a word he said, but I couldn't tell him that; so I just told him that I couldn't understand what he meant. He patiently explained it all to me:

"You know, Ate Luds, when I was very young, I struggled a lot against my homosexuality. Time came when I believed that accepting and embracing it was the only way to liberate me. Indeed, I felt a sense of freedom from being able to live out to the fullest my homosexual orientation.

Singles ministry

"But when I joined the singles ministry of Couples for Christ, I got to know God on a more personal way and I realized that God made me a man, not a homosexual—which means that my true nature is in my manhood and not in my homosexuality.

"In other words, the real enslavement is my homosexuality and my real freedom is in getting out of it and claiming the manhood that God gave me from the beginning of time."

The way Ansel explained it was quite easy to understand, but still quite hard to believe. I attributed it all to the religious fervor and spiritual zeal he was flying high with. I told myself, it would pass and, soon, Ansel would be back to the Ansel I knew from way back—perhaps, even gayer than ever.

But Ansel proved me wrong. The first surprise he sprang was when he introduced his girlfriend to me. Then, he got me as a *ninang* at his wedding. And now, there is this baby—whose thick hair and angular face are Joyce's, but the light complexion, chinky eyes and thin lips are definitely Ansel's.

Yes, Clara, Ansel's transformation must be for real. If this were a charade, it's been going on for an impossibly long time already.

Talent

Also, Ansel may have a talent for acting but there must be more to this than just that, because even if he were able to fool some people some of the time, he couldn't possibly fool everybody all of the time.

And Ansel couldn't possibly fake the unmistakable joy I never found in him before, but which now defines him.

"This is more than spiritual zealousness, Ate Luds," Ansel told me. "This is not a matter of religious fervor, as a popular but grossly misguided sexologist would like to believe. Quite simply, this is a matter of living out my faith."

I gazed into GK's eyes and I believed every word that Ansel said. Joyce is a very happy woman, and a very special lady, too. She is a handmaid of the Lord, according to His plan for Ansel.

My dear Clara, Ansel and Joyce have shown me the road map to real happiness—the map that sets us on the journey closer and closer to God's divine plan for all of us. Find His plan for you, my child. And when you do, make it happen in your life, too.

Then, and only then, shall you find joy.

Viewers cite most memorable films

By Leia Torre

EVER since the first film was produced, people have been going to cinemas and empathizing with the magical stories told on the silver screen. There have been thousands of them, but a few have touched viewers in a special way, and have thus become memorable to them.

We asked some viewers about their special viewing experiences, and this is what they shared:

Obscure

"My most memorable movie is the obscure '80s film, "The Labyrinth" with Jeniffer Connelly and David Bowie. I used to watch it over and over again when I was a kid, and I never got bored with it. It was the first fairytale-like film I watched that had a dark aura, and it shook me up.

"It was something completely different from the fluffy Disney movies I was used to then. It was surreal and haunting, and not as easy to digest.

"That was the first time I really paid attention to a movie, and not only because it had good special effects. I remember thinking about the movie days after I had watched it.

"I think it marked a turning point in my life, because it made me realize that there are no absolutes, and that even what is familiar can become strange if you look at it in a different way."—*Josie Denajeba, 19.*

Seven stories

"The most memorable movie for me is 'Dreams' by Akira Kurosawa. It really made me think! I had to analyze each of the seven stories in order to fully understand what the whole film meant.

"Kurosawa had a very unique way of expressing his ideas. *Ang ganda ng* effects, *parang mga* paintings *ni* Chagall *at* Van Gogh *ang dating*—surrealism and expressionism combined.

"His symbols are really exceptional, *minsan matatawa ka muna bago mo ma*-realize *na seryoso pala ang pinag-uusapan.* The movie awakened a certain fear inside me. *Nakaka*-paranoid *dahil posibleng mangyari.*"—*Mark Joseph Partisala, 17.*

Inspiring

"Most memorable for me was 'Forrest Gump' because I got a lot of core values from that movie. *At saka* it was inspiring because it showed that even people with simple dreams can be great. Forrest Gump achieved great things just by being himself, and not even once did he became a braggart.

"The most wonderful treasure that Forrest had was his mother, *kasi* his mom's love for him was so complete, so unconditional despite his obvious flaws, like being simple-minded. She was always there for him, no matter what."—*Claire Marie Cepe, 22.*

Witty dialogue

"My most memorable movie would have to be 'Breakfast at Tiffany's.' It's slow-paced compared to the films made in Hollywood nowadays, and I really didn't expect to enjoy it. But what really struck me most was the witty dialogue between its lead characters, Holly (Audrey Hepburn) and Paul (George Peppard).

"It also made me appreciate actresses from the '60s—their being multi-talented, elegant, and very distinctively-featured. And the story, simple though it was, had a profound effect on me."—*Lady Anne Maneja, 24.*

Period pieces

"The movie I will never forget is Zefirelli's 'Romeo and Juliet.' *Mahilig kasi ako sa mga* period pieces, especially those set in Europe during the time of knights, castles, kings. The actors who portrayed the main characters were great, and I was affected by their performances. I was also particularly struck by the beauty of Olivia Hussey, who portrayed Juliet.

"Another thing I liked was the director's ability to retain the Shakespearean flavor of the lines, and yet they didn't sound stilted."—*Butch de Juan, 28.*

HEPBURN. Played the gamin female lead in "Breakfast at

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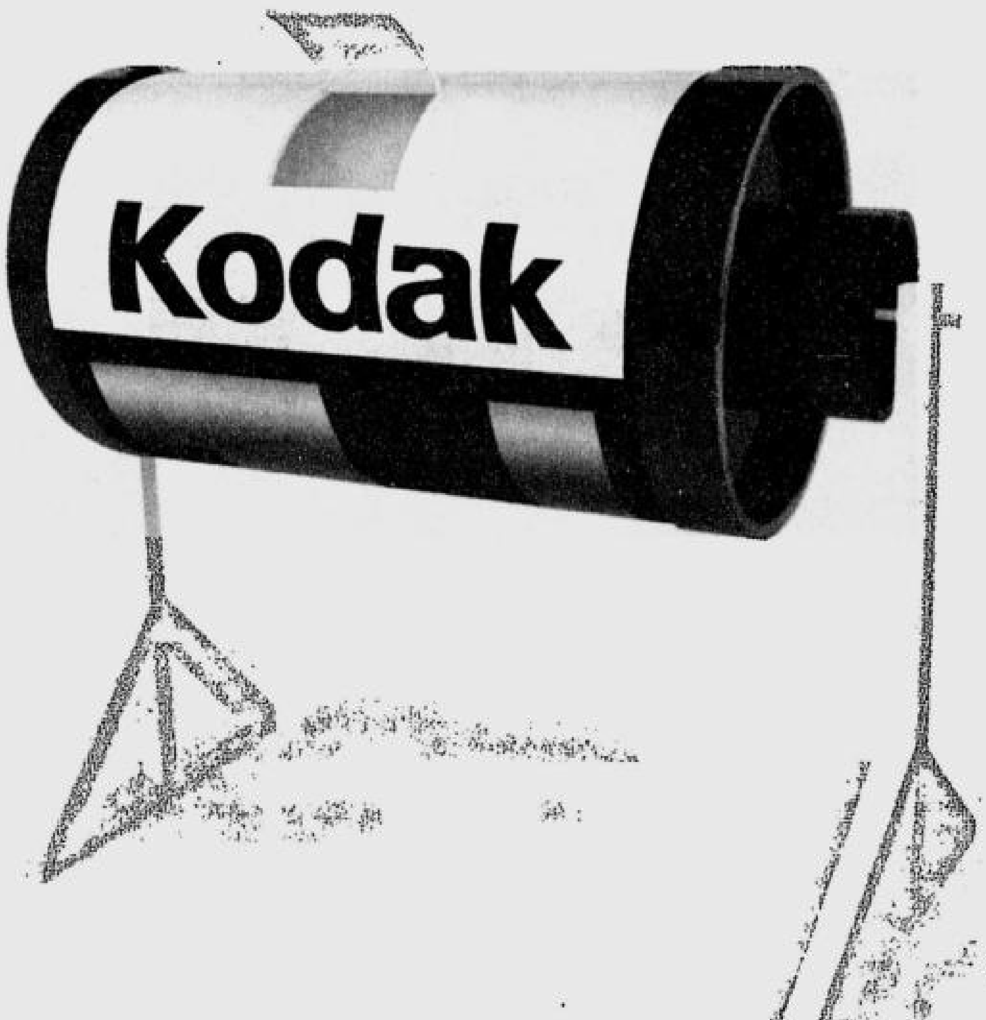

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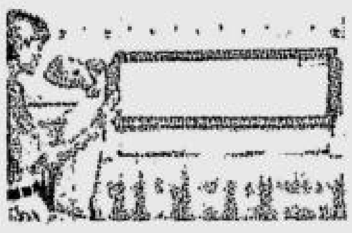

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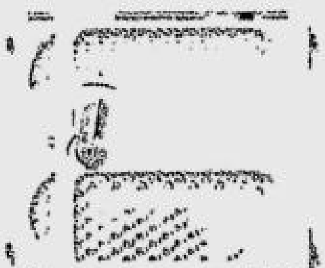

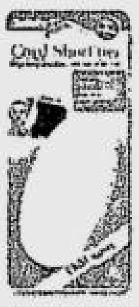

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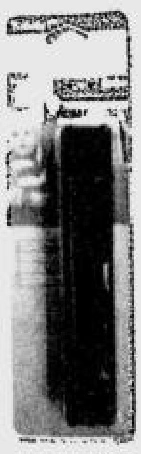

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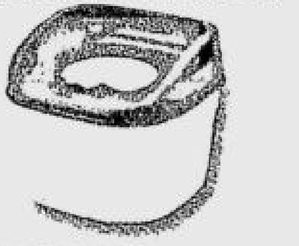

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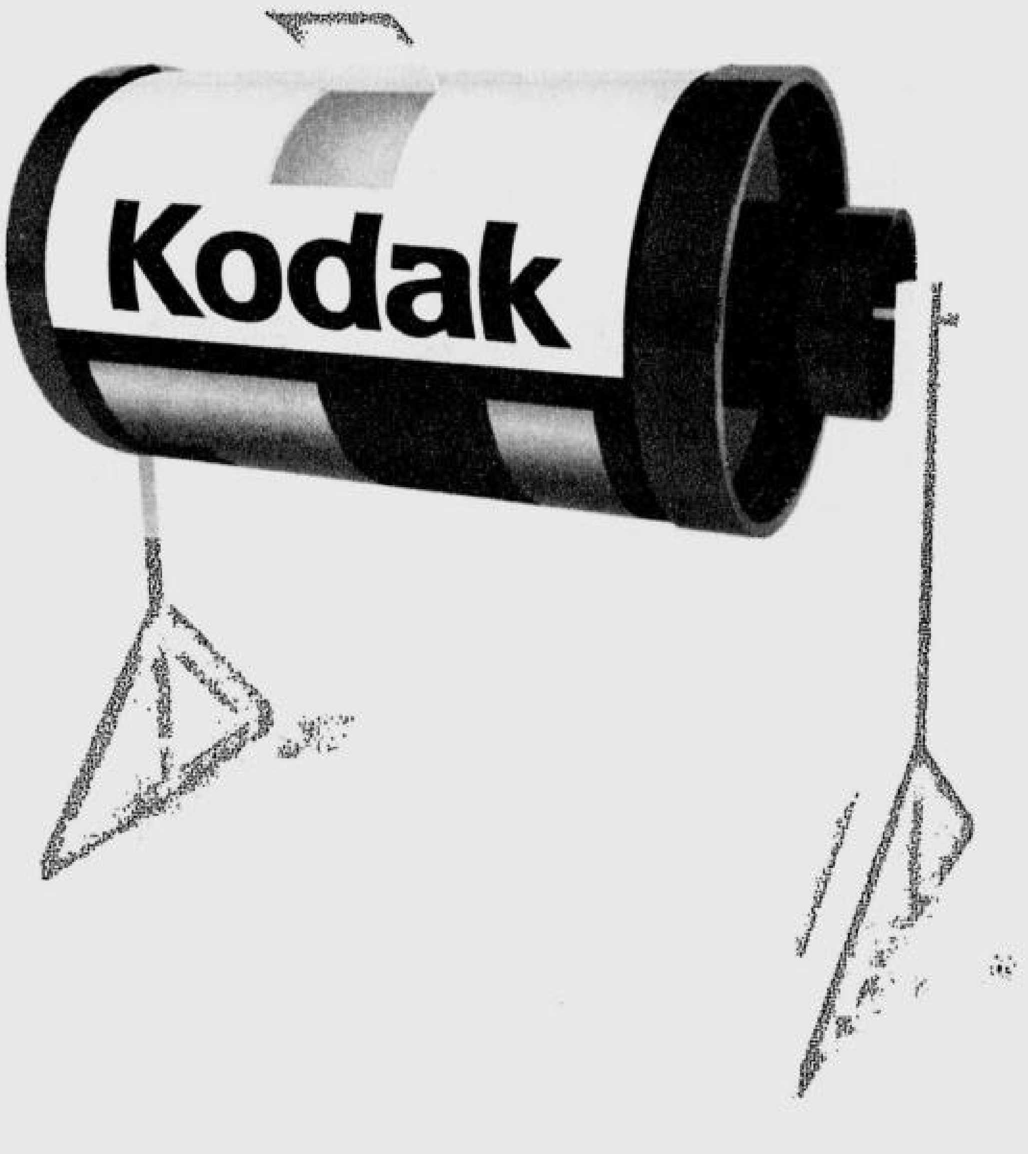

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AIM holds fifth Managing the Arts course

By Nestor U. Torre

ARTISTS, cultural leaders and business people interested in the arts in the Philippines would do well to take the two-week Managing the Arts course being offered by the Asian Institute of Management from Feb. 3 to 14 this year.

Right time

To our mind, the course has come at exactly the right time in the development of the arts in this country. The audience for art endeavors is growing, many more artists are active now compared to a decade ago, and some institutions and organizations have proven that arts and money need not be inimical to each other. In fact, the arts need good financing and financial management to survive and flourish!

As Prof. Cecile B. Manikan, program director of AIM's Managing the Arts Program puts it, "Artists have always shied away from managerial and administrative functions, finding the task dreary and uninspired, and quite alien to what they do best—creating art.

Survival

"Yet functional demands have compelled artists, particularly those in the higher rungs of organizations, to learn management for their survival."

So, AIM's Managing the Arts Program was born in 2001, with 28 participants from the fields of dance, theater, music, film, television, design, literature and architecture (including National Artist Napoleon Abueva!) taking the course.

The course was so successful that two more were conducted in 2002, with even more eager participants joining.

Singapore

The fourth run was held all the way in Singapore, with participants including artist-managers of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Repertory Theater, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore Lyric Opera, Singapore Dance Theater, and cultural officers of the Singapore National Arts Council.

The students were also of mixed nationalities—French, English, Israeli, Dutch and Singaporean.

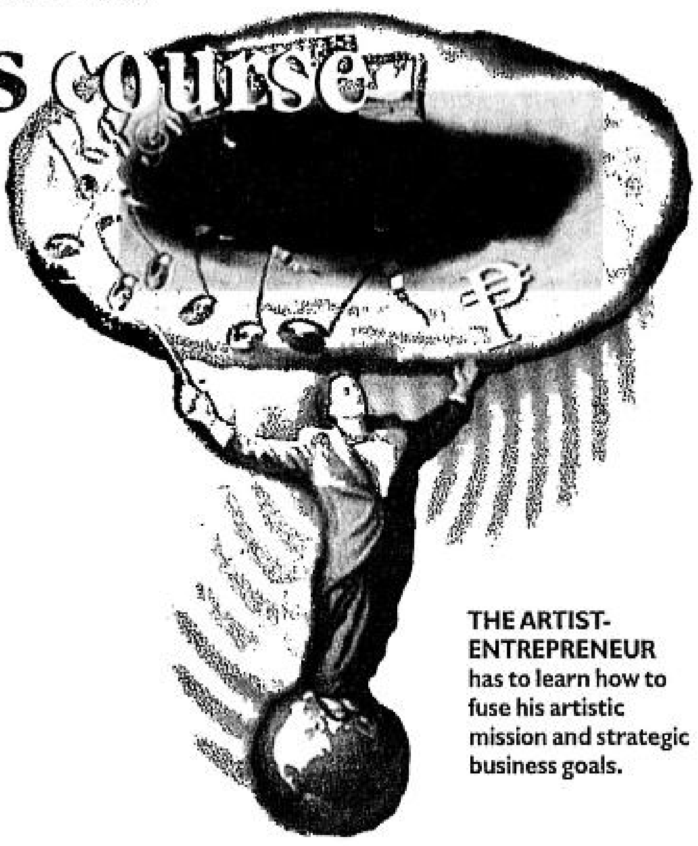
The lectures were administered by AIM professor Manikan, Gaston D. Ortigas, Jr., Eduardo J. Roberto and Maurino P. Bolante, with the local support of Ning S. de Guzman.

Grateful

The participants were grateful for the course's exercises and case studies in managing through critical, creative and systematic thinking, and for the passion, inspiration and renewed appreciation of truth and character as solid bases for artistic integrity.

As a result of the program, some graduates decided to establish their own artistic companies; others expressed their desire to study at AIM to learn more.

The successful "exportation" of the Managing the Arts course to Singapore proves its effectivity in different contexts.



THE ARTIST-ENTREPRENEUR has to learn how to fuse his artistic mission and strategic business goals.

Officers

The course that starts on Feb. 3 is geared towards officers of national cultural institutions, managers of commercially-driven artistic outfits, managers of non-profit mission-driven arts organizations, independent artist-entrepreneurs, cultural officers of the diplomatic community, degree holders of B.S. Arts Management, and other people interested in making the arts thrive in this country.

The course further enhances the marketing, operations, organizational and financial skills of the arts practitioner, develops the full leadership potentials of the arts manager, and bridges the major tensions between the artistic mission and strategic business goals.

Tension

These include the tension between fulfillment and sustainability, between product and market, between key players, between the organization and its external stakeholders, and between creative artists and performers.

Lectures, case studies and support presentations are on understanding the arts environment, self and situational mastery, visioning and planning, managing money, understanding and wooing the arts consumer, creative and intuitive management, actualizing the artists' vision, fundraising and writing proposals, using technology, managing artistic collaboration, and transformational leadership. As you can see, it's a full and no-nonsense course! Call 892-4011 local 144 or fax to 867-2114.

City Lite 88.3 launches 'Night Sessions'

SINCE the latter part of the '90s, City Lite 88.3 has adopted a fresher type of programming, embracing the smooth jazz and rhythm and blues format, but without compromising the stress-free approach it originally started with.

Weekly specials

As 2003 unfolds, listeners now have much more to look out for as City Lite 88.3 presents "Night Sessions," a hip set of weekly specials from 8 to 9 p.m.

On Mondays, start your week with "The Quintessential Box," hosted by Joel, an hour-long show of enjoyable music and cool lifestyle buzz.

Tuesdays will celebrate the music and artistry of women in jazz with "Pearls," hosted by Claudine, who gives us a refreshing look at female jazz artists from Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Mary Lou Williams to Sade, Diane Reeves and Joyce Cooling.

Dennis' "Jazz Journals" on Wednesdays is a look at today's biggest and most influential contemporary jazz artists.

Groove

Join Harry on Thursdays for the "Smooth Soul Revue" as he takes you on a journey into the rebirth of cool, where the urban lifestyle meets the groove of the '70s.

On Fridays, Pinky jumpstarts the weekend with a flight to the land of hi-fi through "Planet Vibe," an hour's worth of pure, unadulterated tunes from jazz-funk to chill-out grooves.

Draw your week to a tuneful close on Sundays with Joey on "The Jazz Corner." This show features jazz classics from veteran musicians and upcoming artists, merged together to produce a relaxing combination perfect for weekend listening.

CLOCKWISE from left, City Lite 88.3 Station Manager and host of "Planet Vive" Pinky Aseron, Claudine, Harry, Dennis, Joel and Joey.

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Junior
INQUIRER

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2003 ✦ 8 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 7, NUMBER 16

WHAT'S INSIDE:

I-Fortitude
Your Poetry
Click away, Kyla!
Shirley's Pets

Looking like Anime

By Eline Santos

ENTHUSIASTIC *otaku* looked forward to the first Philippine Comic Book and Anime Convention held at Megamall last Dec. 21 and 22.

Among the young fans who went were Chris Rey San Pedro, a sixth-grader from Marist School, who participated in the on-the-spot drawing contest. Chris' three-panel drawing was of a wounded angel, a girl caught in fire and a close-up of another character's eyes.

"It's just something from my imagination," he shrugged.

"My favorite character is Detective Conan because he's intelligent," Chris said. If he had the chance, 12-year-old Chris would dress up as that character.

Patricia Catindig and younger sister Geraldine were among the young *otaku* at the convention. Nine-year-old Patricia liked Detective Conan, too, "because he's talented."

Hunter X Hunter Troop

Getting into character in the Cosplay is one of the highlights of the convention. Among those who participated was 4-year-old Lala Adan, dressed up as Machi from "Hunter X Hunter."

Machi, one of the bad guys, releases threads to tie up her enemies. Despite being on the bad side, Machi has her share of fans because she's smart, strong and loyal to her leader.

LALA as Machi

EVIL DEX

Twelve-year-old Kris Ontergco came as Killua, another character from "Hunter X Hunter."

"My older brother thought I looked like Killua," the sixth-grader from Our Lady of Perpetual Succor College, replied when asked why he picked that character.

Ten-year-old Jacob Itchon came as Gon. The main character of "Hunter X Hunter," Gon is on a quest to find his father and has a fishing pole as his favorite weapon.

Cool Cosplayers

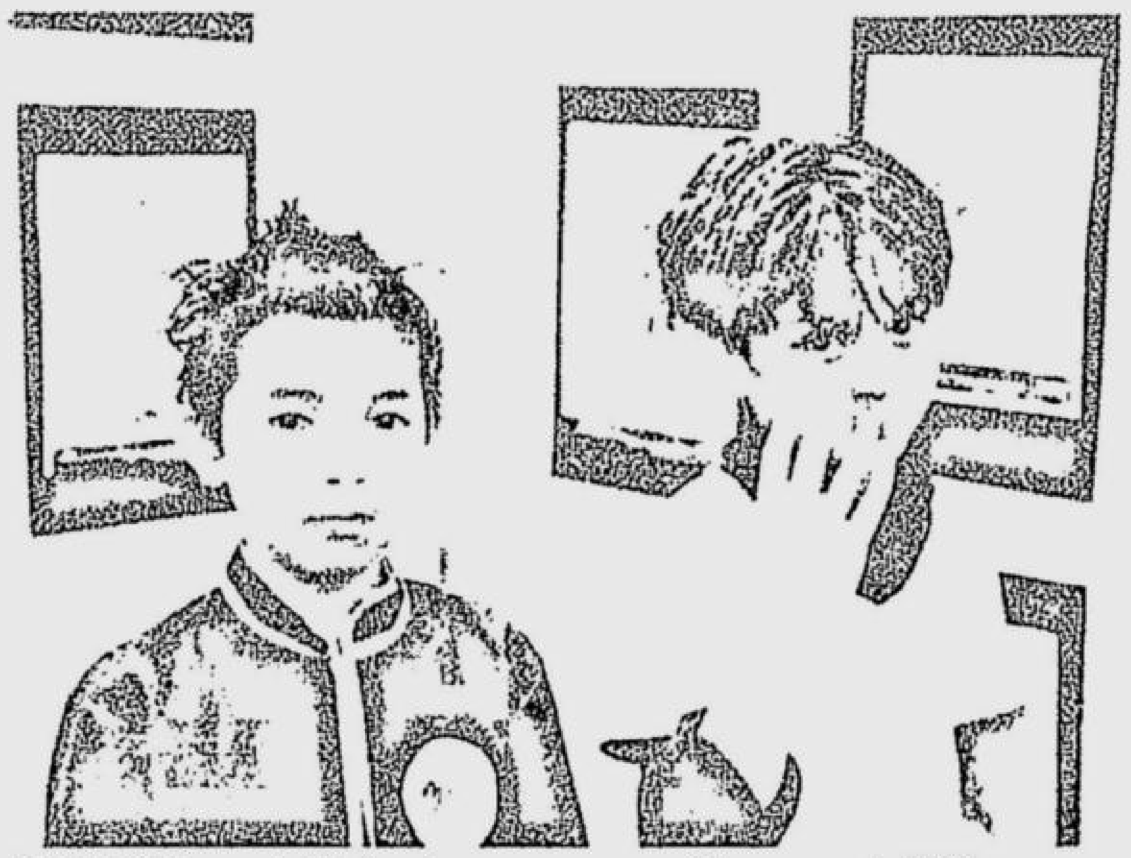
Older participants dressed up as creepy Sadako from the Japanese movie "Ring," an alien from the movie "Alien," characters from "Final Fantasy," "Samurai X," and "Battle Royale."

Of course in a Pinoy convention there were characters from Pinoy *manga* Culture Crash: Sheriff Poppy's guard from "Cat's Trail": Dante and Mina from "Pasig": Diwa, Clarissa and Tammy Tamaraw from "One Day Isang Diwa"; and "Kubori Kikiam" characters.

Choosing the best Cosplayers was difficult for the judges. Third place was tied between Don Don of "Kubori Kikiam" and Haina of "Samurai X," who won the crowd by blowing smoke from his mask. Second place went to Jessica Ignacio who played Mina from "Pasig."

The first place winner was Krizelle Uychinco, 19,

Looking/ p. 3



JACOB and Kris dress up as Gon and Killua EVIL DEX

YOUNG anime fans Patricia and Geraldine EVIL DEX

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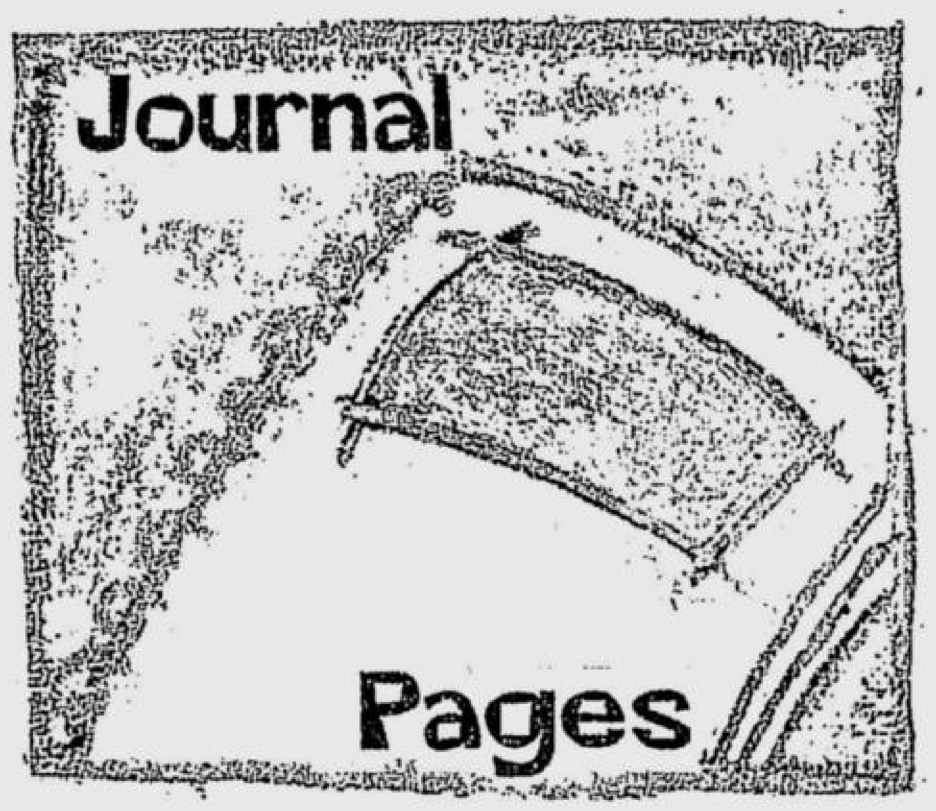
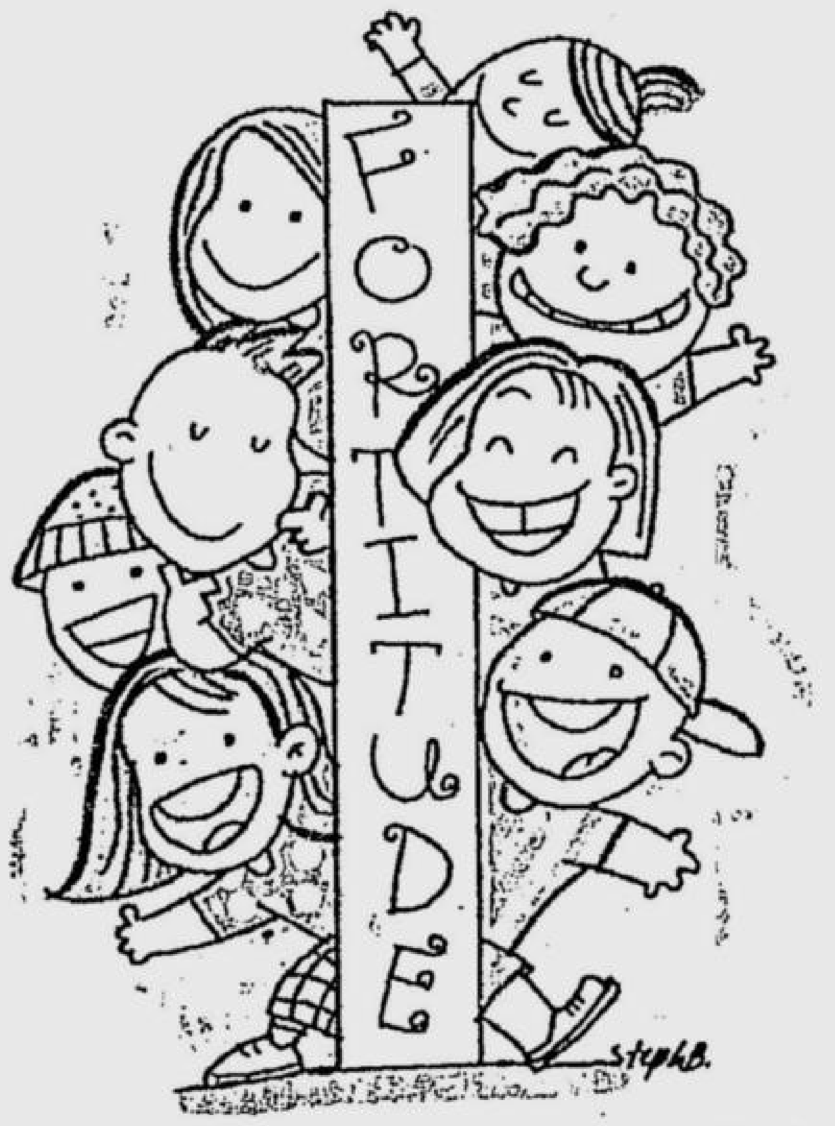


I-Fortitude

By Jenny Cosico
Bloomfield Academy
Las Piñas City



IT has been six months since our classes started. Though we are often noisy, my section —I-Fortitude—is not a class of troublemakers. We are all already very good friends.

We are 20 boys and 15 girls and here's why our section is cool. We have a lot of unique personalities that make our class complete. We have our wizards, Emman (Rank 2 in our whole Freshman class), Juanito and Timothy.

Our athletes include Quintin the swimmer, who is also our most-wanted humorous person. In table tennis, we have Rance; for basketball, it's Ekiss and Ryan. Ekiss also claims to be the cutest guy in class. Volleyball? Hmm...we also have Manilyn, Kris, Karmela and Felboy. Kathriz won first place in track and field in LAPPRISA. And Stefano plays a mean game of badminton. Whew!

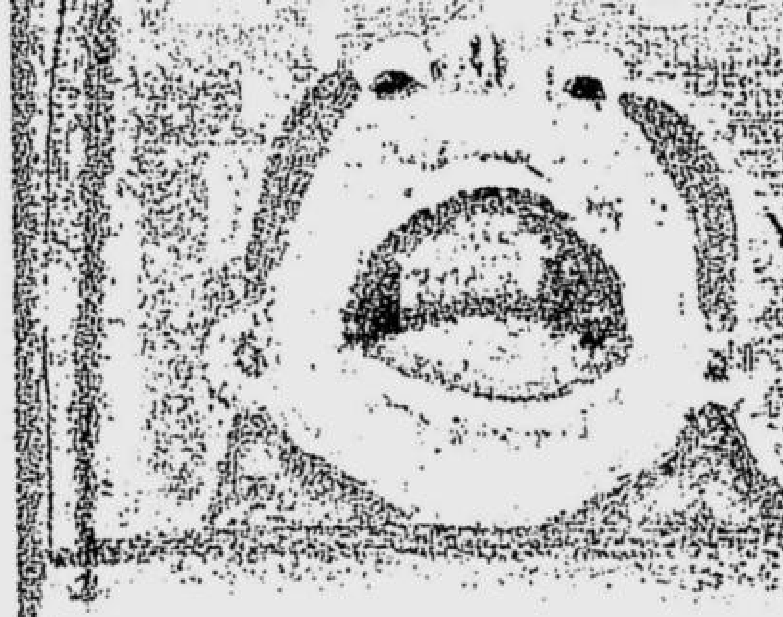
We have tall guys Ephraim and NJ; sweet girls Yumiko, Erika, Clea and Christine; beauty and brains Trix, Micah and Nettie; artists Victoria and Vernon; shy girl Ana Marie; best friends Aaron, Justin, Bryan, Oliver, Troy John Dale and Eroll. Iñaki looks a lot like US actor Tom Cruise.

Our class wouldn't be complete without our adviser. Teacher Thelma Marquez is one of the best teachers in Social Studies. Though strict, she handles us really well and molds each of us into a better person.

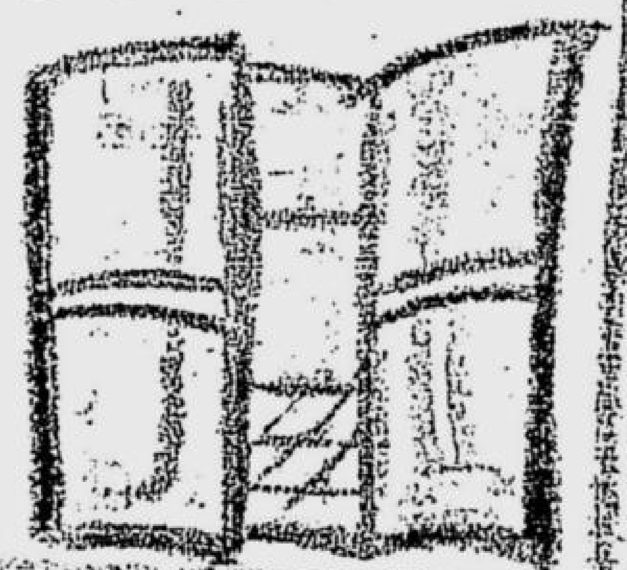
This is our class. A class that is all about love, friendship and beauty. And among us, we call one another true friends.

Sound Familiar ?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight From JI Readers



You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



Super Fan

DEAR JI,

May God's love be with you! Hi, I am a super fan of your special journal and for me reading your article is great. I love reading all the pages of your newspaper because it gives me lots of information, new ideas and, most of all, I learn many things. I know, maybe I'm a first-timer in sending a letter to your publication but I'm hoping you can appreciate my work. Thank you so much! More power and wishing you all the best!—**RIEVA MAY R. MONTECLAR, 14,** Benigno Aquino High School, Makati City.

Dear Rieva,

*Wow! Gee! Thanks for your kind words. We are all blushing now.—**The JI Staff***

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Journal Pages

By Jenny Cosico
Bloomfield Academy
Las Piñas City

FORTITUDE
stephB.

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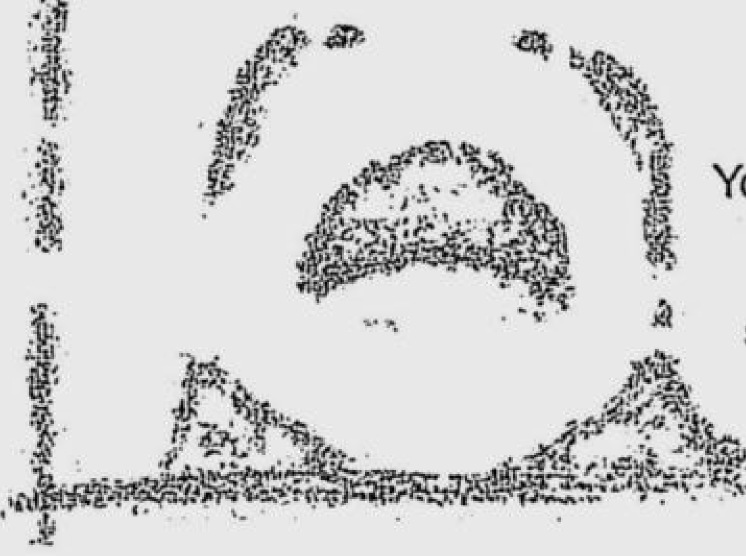
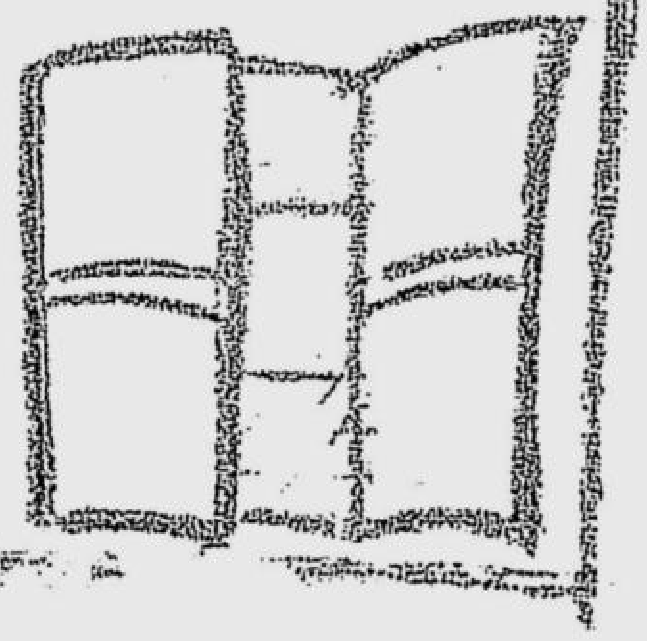


You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



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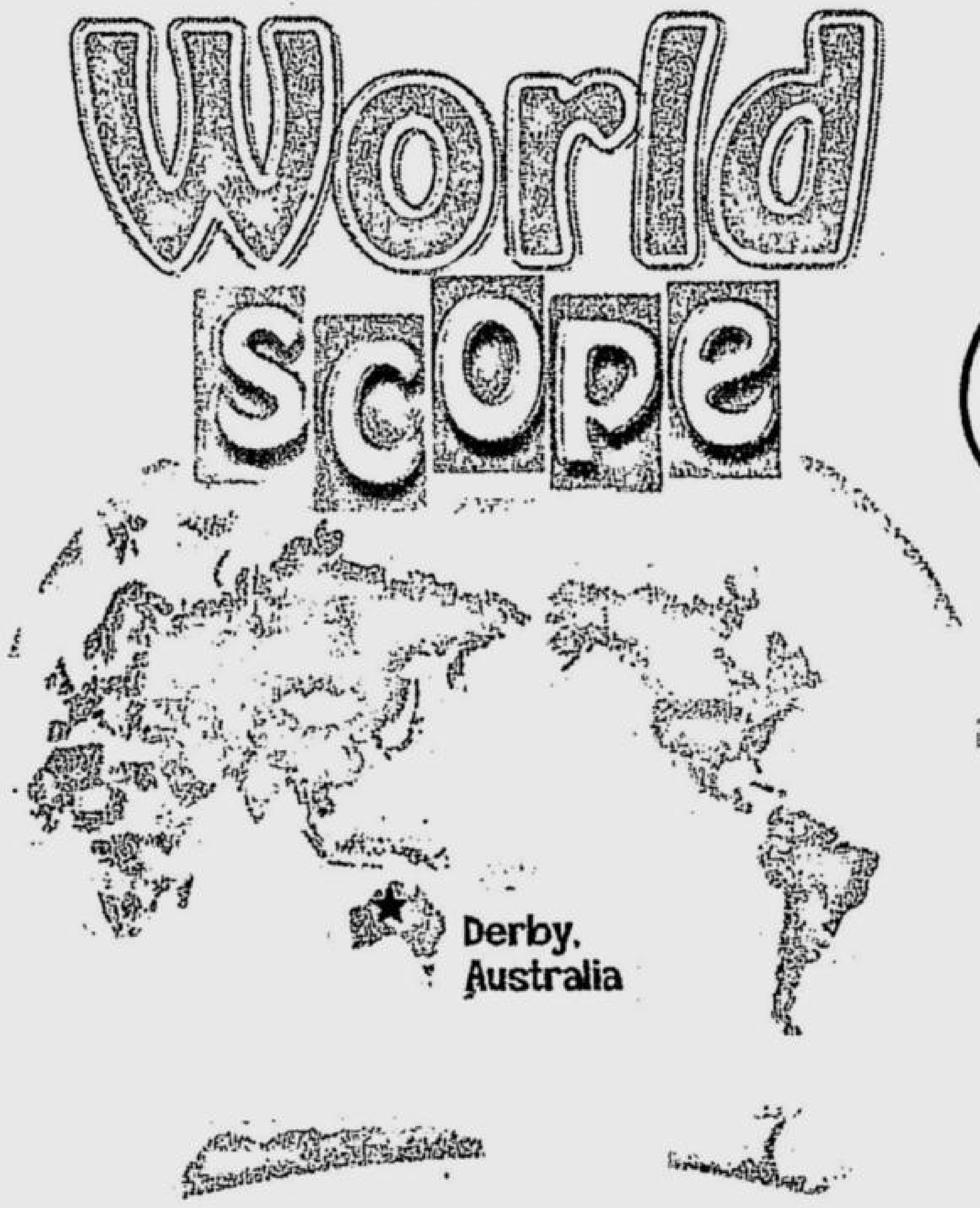
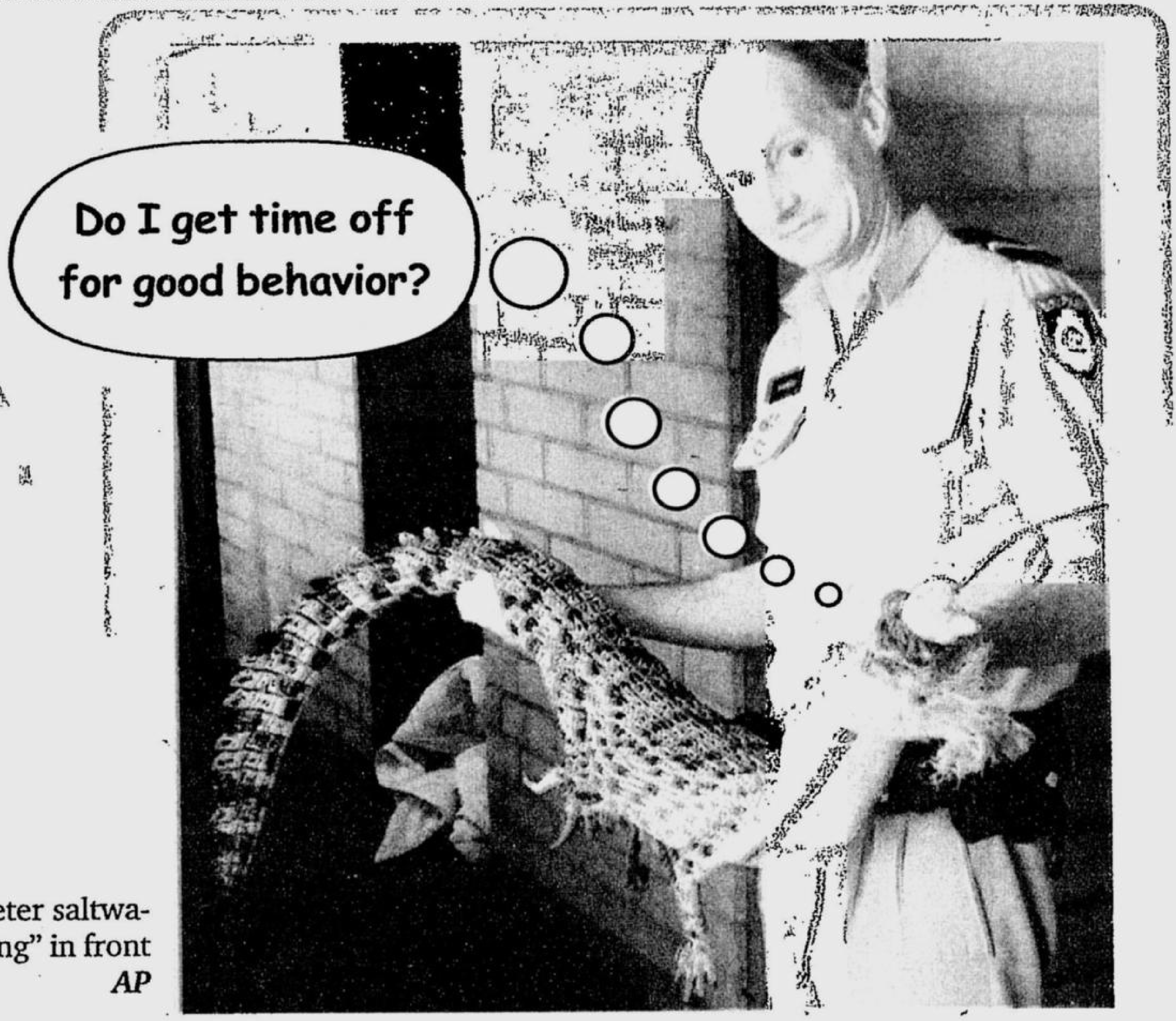




Jail House Croc

POLICEMAN Don Vickers takes this 1.5-meter saltwater crocodile to its cell after it was found "loitering" in front of a nursing home in Derby. *AP*

Looking Like Anime (from page 1)

from De La Salle University, Taft. She was dressed up as Honey, a character from the "Viper Angels." Her shoulder pads were made out of helmets and her skirt was "aerodynamic." Krizelle explained it was "because Honey is a warrior." She then struck a combat pose to show off how her costume moved with her.

Comics Creators

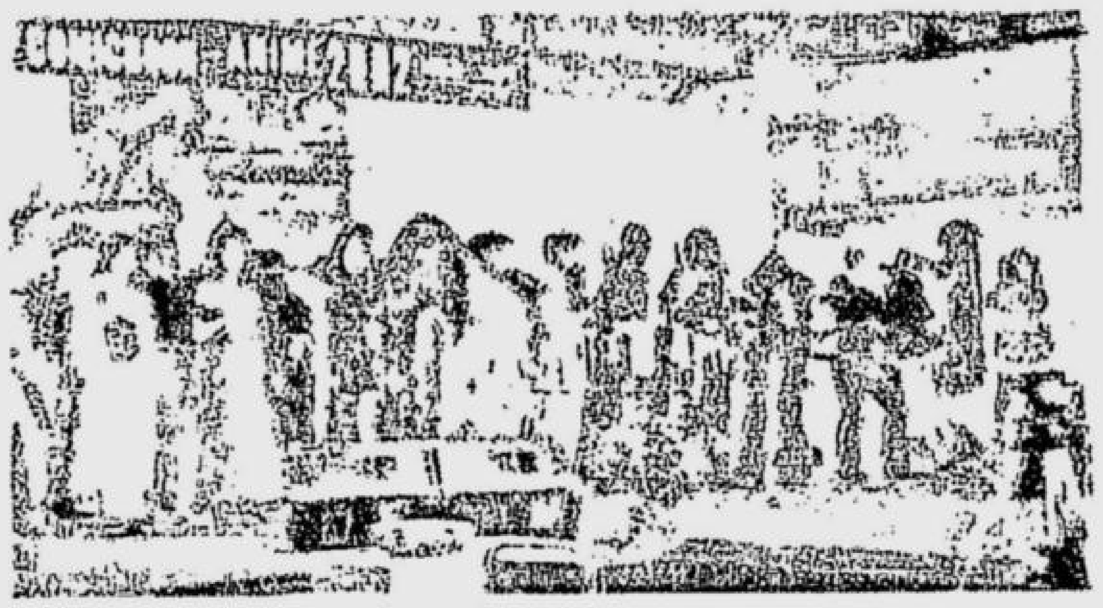
Another fun part of being at a comic book convention was meeting your favorite comics creators in the flesh. You could get the autograph of Pol Medina (Pugad Baboy), Arnold Arre (Mythology Class), Marco Dimaano (Angel Ace), and Lyndon Gregorio (Beerkada), who were all part of Cosplay's panel of judges. Also present were Budgette Tan, Robert Magnuson, and more.

There were of course the creators behind Culture Crash Comics (CCCom) who organized the event. Culture Crash is already on its 9th issue since it first came out in August 2000. Its storylines include "One Day Isang Diwa" by Jescie James Palabay, "Pasig" by Taga-Ilog, "Cat's Trail" by Elmer Damaso, and "Solstice Butterfly" by Jerard Dominic Beltran.

"I'm weird," laughed Taga-Ilog when asked why he was wearing a bucket on his head. If he can have Bill Gates' millions, he said he would buy a golden bucket or two.

EVIL DEX

LALA dyeing her hair blue

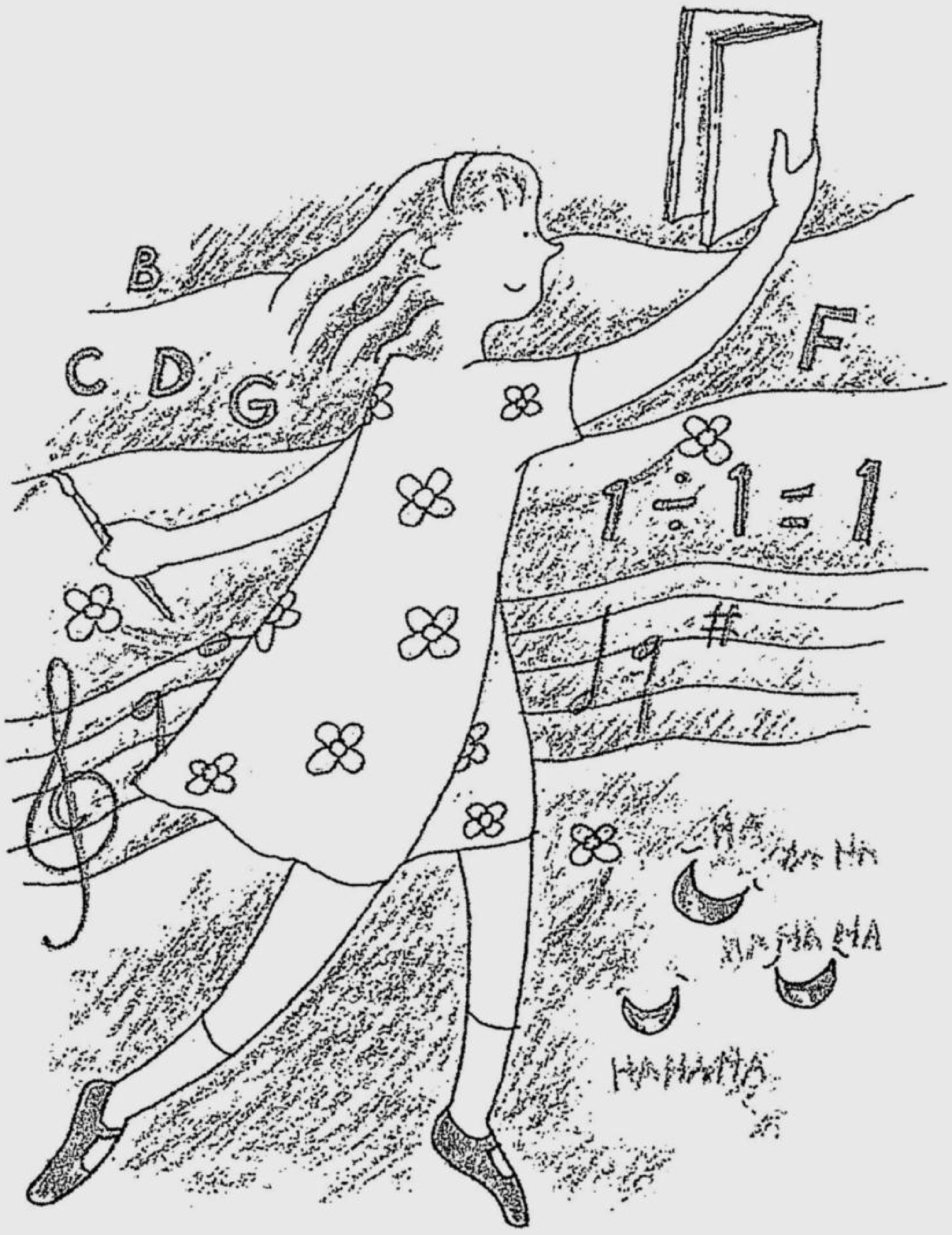

COSPLAY finalists in a row EVIL DEX

OUT
THERE
By Christine A. Patta

Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax number is 897-4794 and our e-mail address is pr_junior_inquirer@inquirer.com.ph. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Workshop

YOUNG MINDS ART ACTIVITY. Still have the Christmas blues? Nothing to do on weekends? Come to Young Minds, 2nd Flr., Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City for some fun art activities on Sundays, Feb. 2 and March 9 from 1-4 p.m. Teachers Rita Badilla and Endo Pascasio of Kids at Art will teach kids some of the techniques illustrators use to illustrate their books and how to make masks and puppets. Workshops are free.



Homework Time

By Heidi Eusebio-Abad

Homework's not done.
Enough time for play.
Hiding your books
Won't wish it away.
In page twenty-three
Are consonant clusters
Book letter F is
On math problem busters.
The reading assignment's
A funny, old story.
For music and art,
There's no need to worry.
Due in a month?

Heidi is a mom and teaches English at the University of the Philippines in Quezon City.

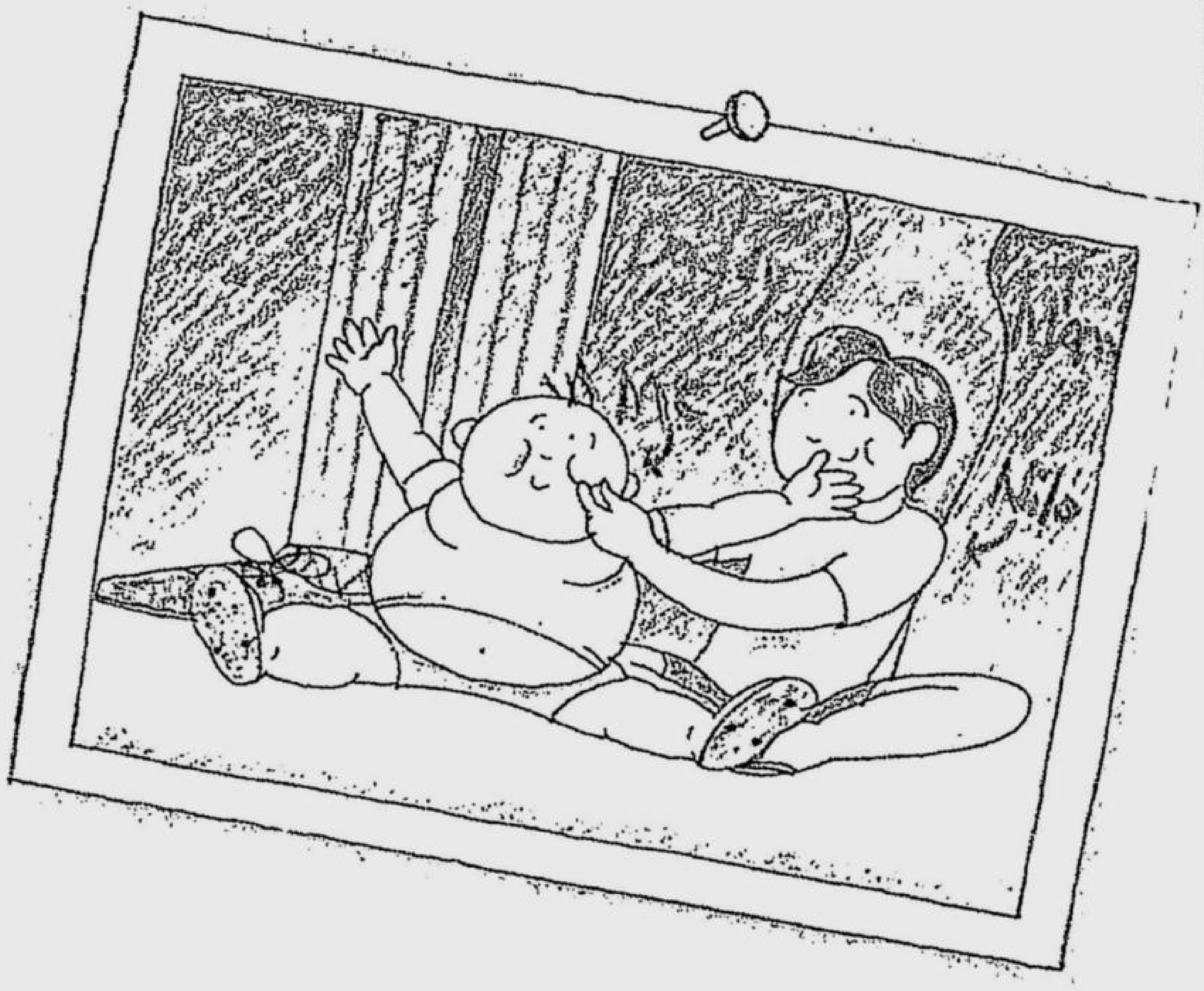
Art by Marc Zara

My Family

By Enrico Cruz

Dad is TALL
Mom is small,
I am chubby
Noel is my buddy
We live under one roof,
I have lots of PROOFS.

***Enrico** is a pet-loving poet. He swims, too.*



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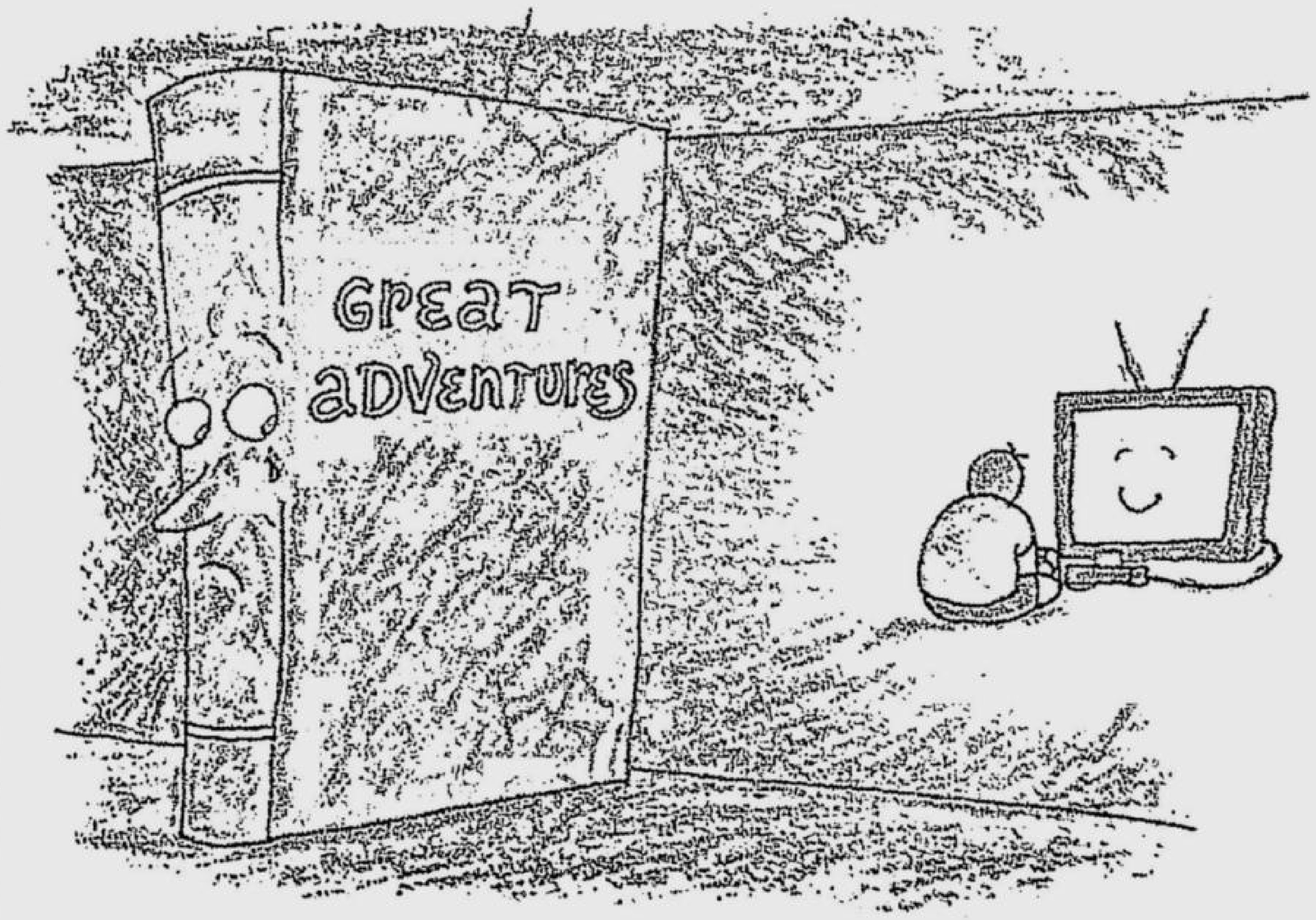


Book Talk

By Zarah Grace Calimag-Gagatiga

You can just imagine
How lonely I've become
The day you had received
Your brand new Playstation
You played with it
Almost every hour
You left me on a shelf
Alone, cold and far
I miss your eyes
That read, skim and scan
I miss your mind
that knows and understands
I miss your hands, your arms
And the warmth it gives
When you cuddle me close
In a comforting embrace.
It is clear to me that you've finally found
A high-tech friend, digitally enhanced!
I look at you and I wonder
Will you ever read me again from cover to cover?

***Zarah** enjoys writing poems for children. She is a storyteller and an active officer of The Alitaptap Storyteller's Group.*

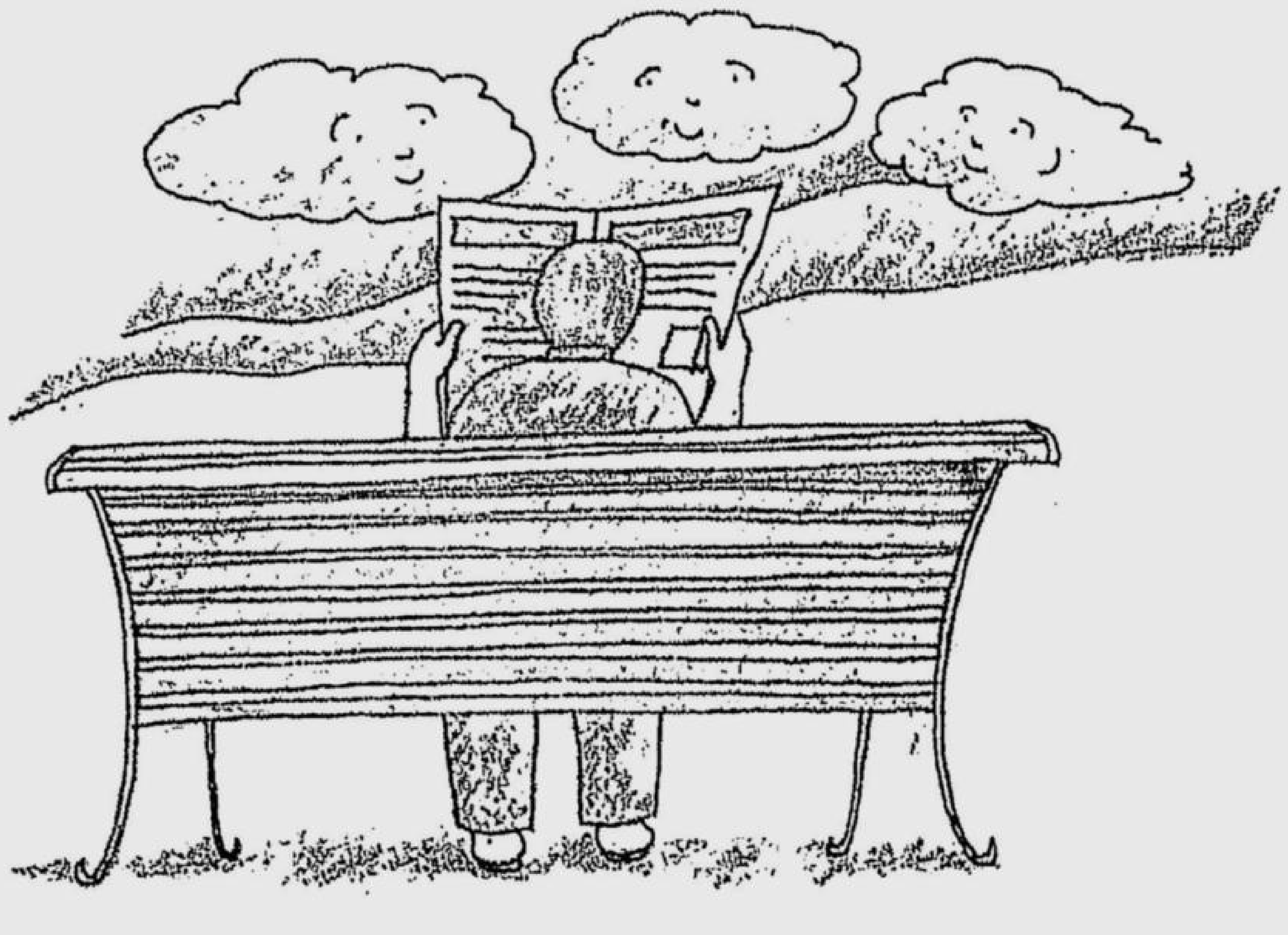
Sa Aking Mga Mag-aaral

(Kina Jethro, Carla, LA, Alyssa, Frances, Ysabel, Meryem, Gideon, Renan, Mary Ann, Mitsumi, Aeron, Bryan, Nicole, Haya, Nordick, Joeldon, at Lean Carlo)

Ni Genaro R. Gojo Cruz

Lagi ko pa ring naririnig ang inyong mga tinig;
sa aking pagtulog, pag-iisa, pagbabasa,
pagbaba at pagsakay ng dyip,
ang inyong mga mumunting hiling
tulad ng basahin ko sa inyo ang mga bagong labas
na tula at kuwento sa Junior Inquirer,
ang inyong mga tawanan at di maubos-ubos na tanong
- na kung minsan ay mahirap na hanapan ng sagot.
Paano ko kayo malilimutan?
Kayong mga pinanggalingan ng aking mga tula at kuwento,
kayong mga totoong bida na aking sinubaybayan
sa loob ng dalawang taon.
Maaaring sabihin ninyong ako'y gurong nang-iiwan
ngunit habang may mga tula at kuwento kayong mababasa
sa bawat pahina ng Junior Inquirer tuwing sabado,
lagi't lagi tayong magkikita, magkukuwentuhan,
magtatawanan, magbabasa at magsusulat,
lilikha pa ng mga bagong bida at mahika.
At mararamdaman ninyo
na di ako umalis,
na di ako gurong nang-iiwan.

*Si **Genaro** ay dating nagtuturo sa Colegio Sta. Isabel of Laguna. Nag-aaral siya ngayon sa Ateneo de Manila University at kumukuha ng kursong MA Malikhaing Pagsulat (Filipino).*
*Si **Marc** ay miyembro ng Ilustrador ng Kabataan (Ang InK).*



¿Thinkathon?
BY BONG ALAMEDA

What's in a (New) Name?-2

HERE'S the second (and tougher) installment of our quiz series on the new-old names of world countries and territories. Again, can you link the new with the old?

1. Egypt and Syria	A. Zaire
2. Botswana	B. British Guiana
3. Mozambique	C. Bechuanaland
4. Guyana	D. Dutch West Indies
5. Tuvalu	E. Gilbert Islands
6. Madagascar	F. French Sudan
7. Congo	G. Basutoland
8. Mali	H. New Hebrides
9. Kiribati	I. Tanganyika
10. Benin	J. Dahomey
11. Tanzania	K. Rhodesia
12. Vanuatu	L. Portuguese East Africa
13. Zimbabwe	M. Malagasy
14. Lesotho	N. Ellice Islands
15. Netherlands Antilles	O. United Arab Republic

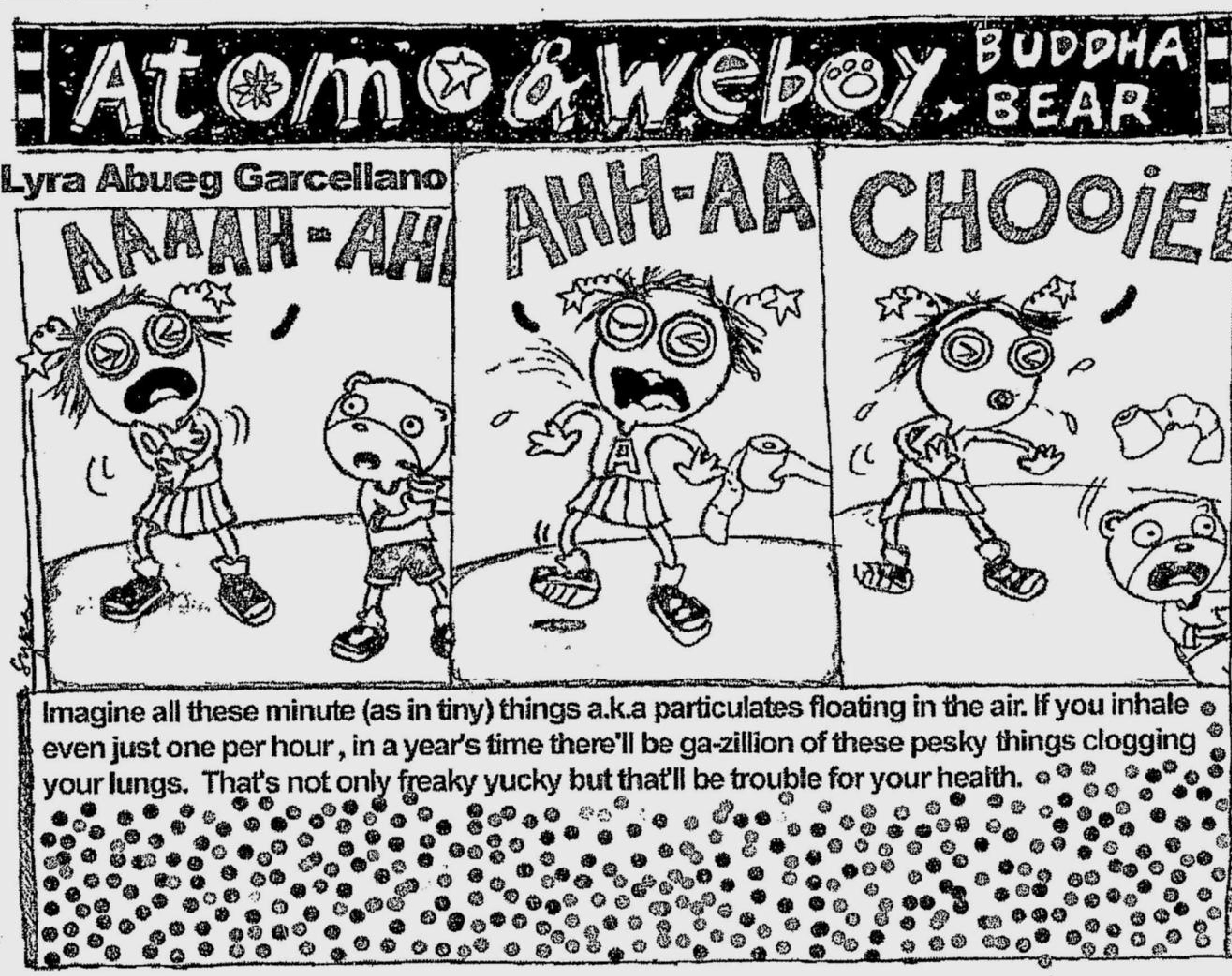
Answers:

1. O
2. C
3. L
4. B
5. N
6. M
7. A
8. F
9. E
10. J
11. I
12. H
13. K
14. G
15. D

Ratings:

superior
excellent
good

11-12 9-10 6-8



Lyra Abueg Garcellano

Imagine all these minute (as in tiny) things a.k.a particulates floating in the air. If you inhale even just one per hour, in a year's time there'll be ga-zillion of these pesky things clogging your lungs. That's not only freaky yucky but that'll be trouble for your health.

There's a lot of icky substance in the air! It's because of these icky super small stuff that makes the air dirty that's why we sneeze,wheeze or cough.

LETS BREATHE CLEAN AIR!

Let's say bye-bye to smoke emissions that cause air pollution.

Kids 'r'rrific

PRETTY photographer Kyla takes a turn in front of the camera.

ROGER CARPIO

Clickity-clicking Kyla

By Astrid Tobias

EVERY summer, Kyla's mother made it a point to enroll her and her sister in workshops and lessons. Last summer, Kyla Nicole Fabian attended swimming lessons, a theater workshop and a photography workshop.

When Kyla went to the first day of the photography workshop, she didn't think she would enjoy it. That's where she was wrong!

On the second day, when she began learning about the different parts of the camera and how to take pictures using different angles, Kyla found a new hobby that she actually excelled in and enjoyed.

Best Technique

Later during the workshop, her photograph of her sister, Mavis, going down the slide was awarded with the "Best Technique."

She even took home an instamatic camera as her prize.

Kyla has turned into a photography buff. She simply likes clicking away with her camera using her family and classmates from Miriam Grade School as her models.

Kyla is also trying her hand at writing poems and articles. She said her teachers in school keep encouraging her to write and, at the same time, take a lot of photos. However, right now, Kyla enjoys taking pictures more.

Inspiration

"I express myself better through writing," Kyla explains. "But I remember things because of the photos that I take and these inspire me to write."

Kyla enjoys playing the part of the photographer so much that she doesn't even mind that she doesn't appear in the photographs.

You know why?

"That's because I get to keep the photos," Kyla smiled.

R U 'RRIFIC?

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rrific' or know someone who is, fill out the the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a

FREE Junior Inquirer & CASIO EMI T-shirt, Plus! a chance to win a Keylighting keyboard!

Kids 'r'rrific

nomination form

I nominate: ____________________

Age: ____________________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

____

She/he lives at ____________________

and studies at ____________________

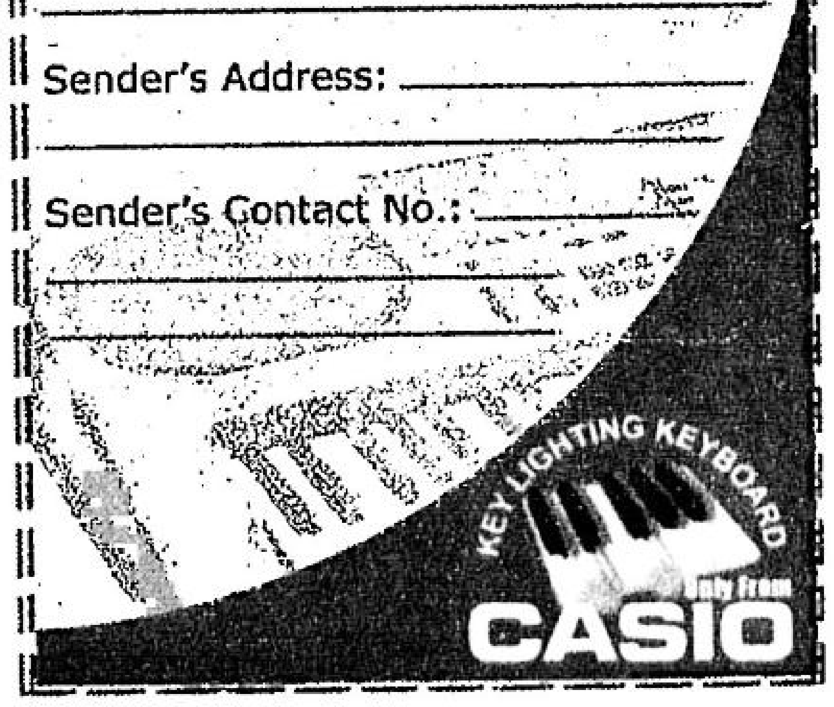
Her/his contact number is: ____________________

Sender's Name: ____________________

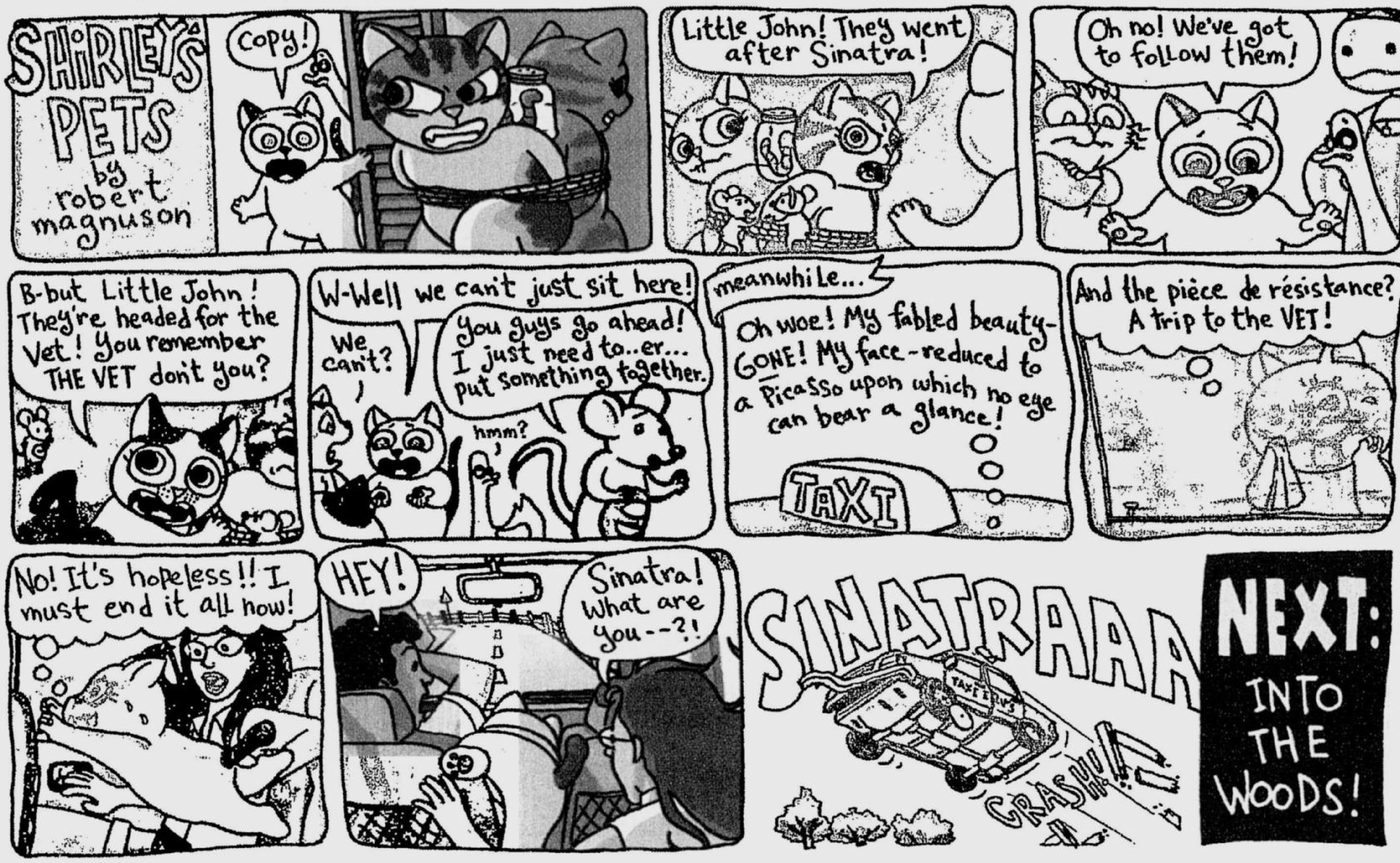
Sender's Age & School: ____________________

Sender's Address: ____________________

Sender's Contact No.: ____________________



Last Episode: Pancho defeats Copy and soon learns the whereabouts of Little John's half-invisibility ring. The ring, as you well know, is on the finger of Sinatra. She is suffering from body-parts popping in and out of sight. Not knowing any of this, Shirley's solution is to bring Sinatra to the Vet...


SHIRLEY'S PETS
by robert magnuson
Copy!
Little John! They went after Sinatra!
Oh no! We've got to follow them!
B-but Little John! They're headed for the Vet! You remember THE VET don't you?
W-Well we can't just sit here!
We can't?
You guys go ahead! I just need to..er... put something together.
hmm?
meanwhiLe...
Oh woe! My fabled beauty-GONE! My face-reduced to a Picasso upon which no eye can bear a glance!
TAXI
And the pièce de résistance? A trip to the VET!
No! It's hopeless!! I must end it all now!
HEY!
Sinatra! What are you--?!
SINATRAAA
CRASH!!
NEXT: INTO THE WOODS!

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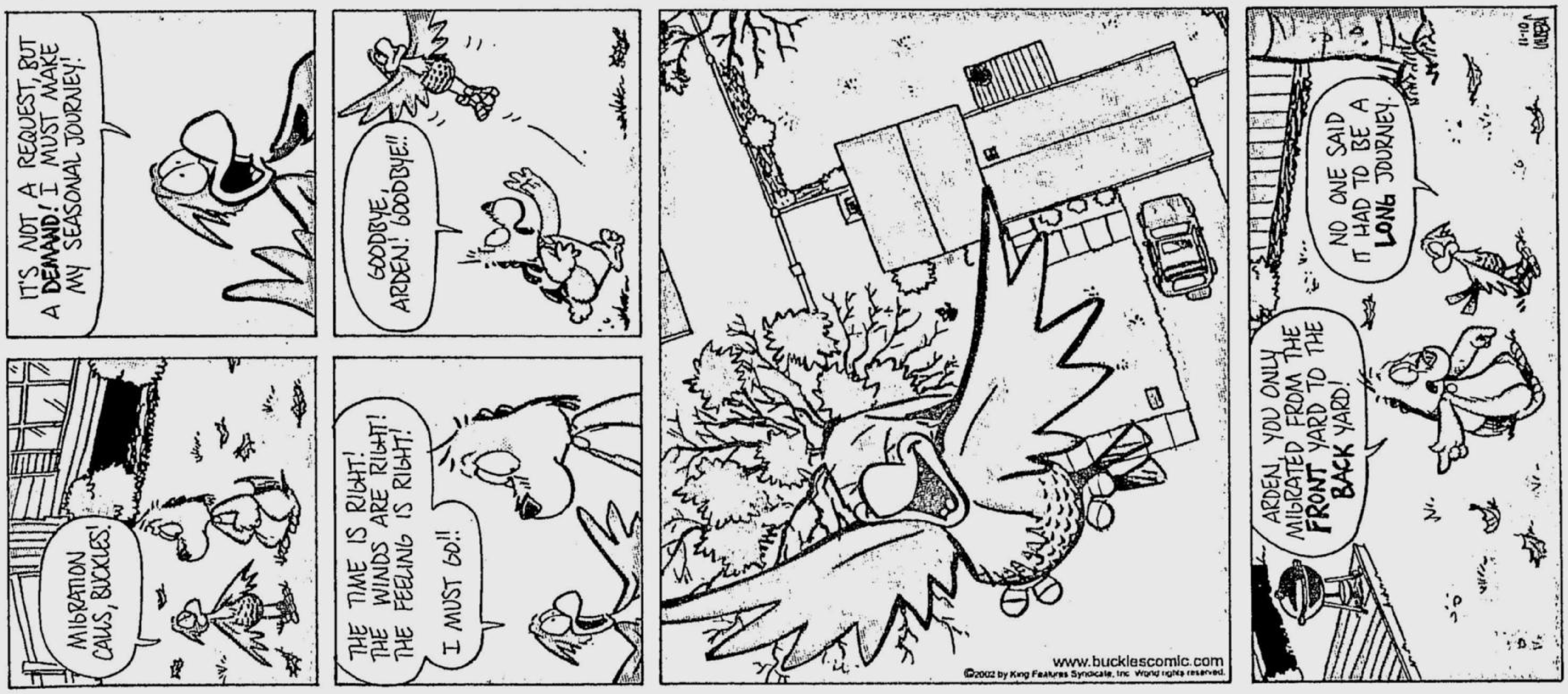
BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


MIGRATION CALLS, BUCKLES!
IT'S NOT A REQUEST, BUT A DEMAND! I MUST MAKE MY SEASONAL JOURNEY!
THE TIME IS RIGHT! THE WINDS ARE RIGHT! THE FEELING IS RIGHT!
I MUST GO!!
GOODBYE, ARDEN! GOODBYE!!
ARDEN, YOU ONLY MIGRATED FROM THE FRONT YARD TO THE BACK YARD!
NO ONE SAID IT HAD TO BE A LONG JOURNEY.

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